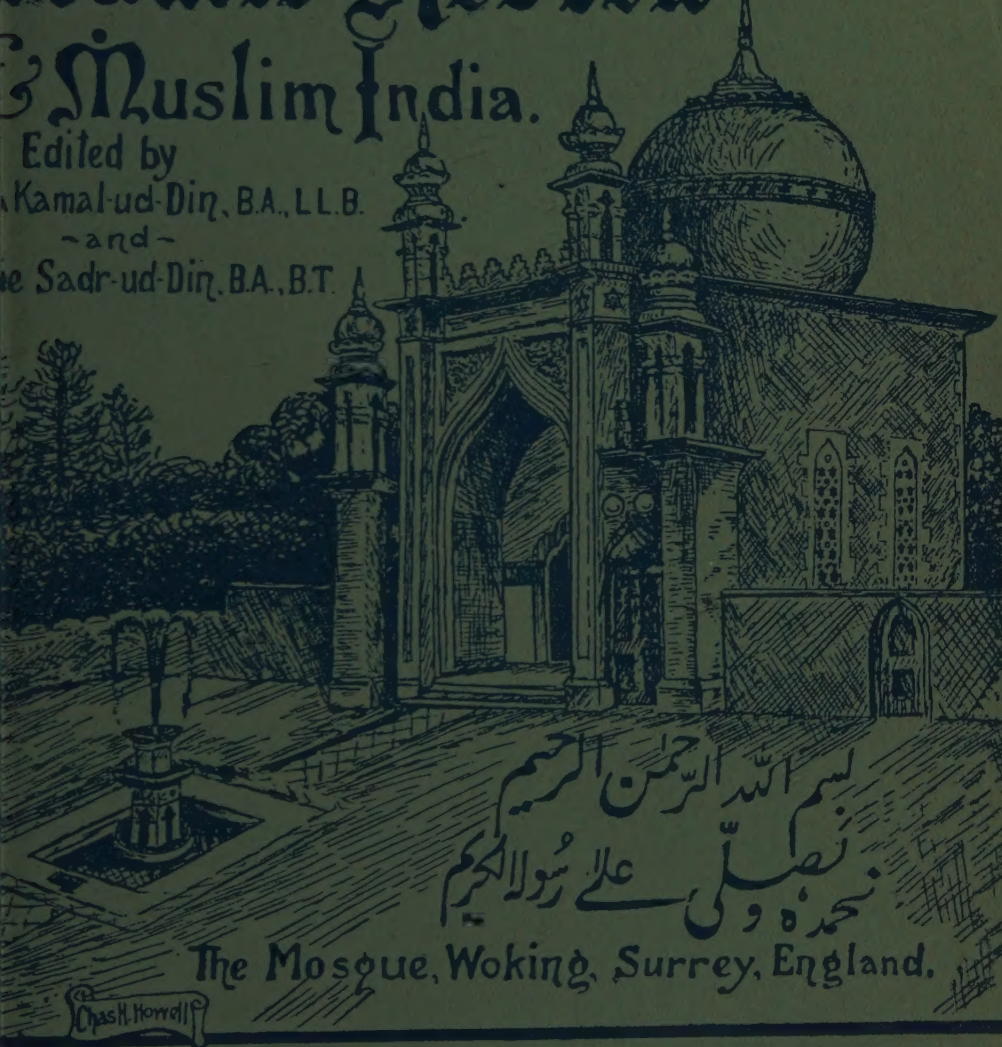


MAY 1915

[No. 5

# Islamic Review & Muslim India.

Edited by  
Kamal-ud-Din, B.A., LL.B.  
-and-  
Sadr-ud-Din, B.A., B.T.



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PRICE SIXPENCE.

اسلامک ریویو کی قیمت میں اضافہ

موجودہ ضرورتوں کے مقابل رسالہ کا حجم کافی نہ تھا اسلئے سروسٹ رسالہ  
 فریاد پور کیا گیا۔ آئندہ ممکن ہے بہت جلد حجم اور بڑے یا رسالہ مینہ میں  
 دوبارہ جو جاوے قیمت سال روان اسوقت بعض سے بحساب پانچ روپہ وصول  
 ہو رہی ہے۔ اور یہ قیمت رسالہ سات روپہ کر دی ہے۔ پہلے میں ان احباب  
 نسخہ مت جین عرض کرتا ہوں کہ یہ رسالہ تاجرانہ اصول پر نہیں چلایا گیا۔  
 غرض یہ ہے کہ اسکی قیمت سی کا بیان مفت غیر مسلم دنیا میں تقسیم ہوں۔ پہلے  
 رسالہ اس غرض کو مد نظر رکھ کر اگر یہ احباب خود بخود زائد قیمت بچے یا لاہور  
 میں پھیلدین تو ان کی غنائت و الامین یہ امر ہی خدا پر چھوڑتا ہوں۔ یہ رسالہ  
 تو بیکار مافی عوض ہے کہ اسلام کا خوشنڈہ چہرہ نہ صرف غیر اسلامی دنیا پر چمکنے  
 لگتا ہے بلکہ خود انگریزی خوان مسلم طبقہ اسلام کا عاشق ہوتا جاتا ہے  
 خود بخود قلوب میں تبلیغ دین کا خاص جوش پیدا ہو رہا ہے۔ کل اسلامی دنیا  
 از سر نو اصلی اسلامی زندگی کی طرف آرہی ہے۔ جن فریداران رسالہ کا سال  
 سی درجانی ماہ سے شروع ہوا ہے وہ بھی اگر گذشتہ سن کا نمبر سٹو اور احباب  
 شروع سال سے درست کر دین تو رسالہ سے بیت سا بوجہ بٹکا ہو جاوے گا۔  
 کیونکہ متفرق احباب علی کی زیادتی کو چاہتے ہیں اور بیان بکمالش نہیں  
 میری غرض تو یہ ہے کہ حقدار مکن ہو یہ رسالہ مفت تقسیم ہو۔ سو اس میں  
 جو میرا نمانہ بنائے وہ عند اللہ اپنے آپ کو ماجور سمجھے۔

خواجہ کمال الدین Khwaja Kamaluddin

### IMPORTANT NOTICE.

To meet the complaints of such of our readers and subscribers as may not happen to receive particular numbers of the ISLAMIC REVIEW, the undersigned requests them to inform him at once.

SH. NOORAHMAD, Manager.

THE MOSQUE, WOKING, ENGLAND.







CAPTAIN STANLEY MUSGRAVE SHAIKH ABDUR-RAHMAN,  
NORTHUMBERLAND FUSILIERS.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

# ISLAMIC REVIEW

AND

## MUSLIM INDIA

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VOL. III]

MAY 1915

[No. 5

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### ENGLAND'S DEBT TO INDIA

BY AMEENA

GENEROUS and loyal India,  
Noble-hearted, brave, and true,  
Priceless gem in Eastern setting,  
What Old England owes to you !

Not alone a debt of honour—  
Human flesh and blood in fray—  
But the soul of India's teachings,  
Knowledge of a Higher Way.

These our splendid, gallant brothers,  
Great examples to us give,  
Which our fellow-men of England  
Would do well to know, and live.

Not alone in mere lip service,  
For they *practise*, preach, and do,  
Spreading such a gracious influence  
Over each and all of you.

England, you are slow to follow  
Those examples set for you ;  
Rise and shake off worn out dogmas,  
In exchange—the higher view.

Shame to be so unenlightened,  
And so loth to learn and live  
Teachings taught by Eastern brothers  
Who have noble things to give.



Are you thus content to idle,  
 Unaware of India's gift,  
 Of her noble sacrifices  
 Will the fog-clouds never lift ?

Gracious, gentle sons of India,  
 How you put the rest to shame,  
 I, in humble admiration,  
 Try to follow in your name.

### THE ENGLISH MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

is growing steadily. Several people joined Islam formally this month. All of them are characterized by remarkable enthusiasm for the Faith. A young Londoner, who has been given Abdul-Aziz as his Islamic name, bids fair to develop into a zealous and earnest worker. Madam Bloch, of Brighton, also deserves particular mention for the affection and devotion that she displayed for her co-religionists and newly-adopted faith on her visits to the Mosque. The Muslim name given to her is Noor-Jahan (*i.e.* the Light of the World). It is hoped that she will put forth efforts to spread the light and show the truth to those among whom she is living.

The brotherhood is gaining in strength by the members often coming to the Mosque at Woking, and thus benefiting one another by actual contact and intercourse. The democratic spirit that prevails at the Mosque and at the residence of the Imam is considered as a unique feature of Islam in this land by the Britishers themselves. Muslims and non-Muslims are alike welcome to the Mosque and at the table. The Right Hon. Lord Headley, Shaikh Rahmatullah Farooq, who repeats his visits to the Mosque, is very conspicuous in setting an example in that direction. His lordship's unassuming courtesy and brotherly affection towards all his co-religionists, his genial and noble treatment of all of them, are greatly admired and appreciated.

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This month brought us the pleasure of having in our midst our esteemed brothers, Haroun Mustafa Leon, Ph.D., LL.D., and Yahya Parkinson, F.S.G., M.B.A.A. Both delivered interesting and learned lectures at the Mosque and also at the Lindsey Hall, Notting Hill Gate, London.

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Under the auspices of the Islamic Society our esteemed brother, Professor Haroun Mustafa Leon, delivered a lecture on "Temperance in Islam" at Eustace Miles' Restaurant, London. Dr. Pollen presided. It was a very eloquent, lucid, and instructive lecture, and provoked repeated applause. It made a very favourable impression on the audience as to the Islamic doctrines. The Right Hon. Lord Headley, the Hon. Mirza A. A. Beg, of the India Council, and several other speakers took part

in the discussions, which were closed by an eloquent speech by the president, who expressed the greatest admiration for the Islamic faith and for the beneficent principles laid down by Muhammad—the principles of sobriety and temperance in all matters, the principles of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks, of moral and social purity—the principles to the beneficence of which the British nation and the British Government seem now to be awakening.

A detailed report of the lecture will appear next month.

### In Memoriam.

On Tuesday, the 13th of April, 1915, Mrs. Eustace Harris was buried in New Southgate Cemetery, and the burial service was performed by the Maulvie Sadr-ud-Din, Imam of the Woking Mosque. Mrs. Harris cherished Islamic views and lived a truly Muslim life, and displayed patience and resignation during a very protracted period of suffering from an obstinate disease to which she succumbed at last. She was a devoted wife and a loving mother, and was very popular among all who knew her for her genial and unselfish character. She is being greatly missed by her many friends.

The Muslim funeral service was performed at her burial according to her own last will.

L. E. HARRIS.

## THE PROMISED COMFORTER

### LIFE IN DEATH

THIS issue of the ISLAMIC REVIEW announces sad news—the death of Mrs. Harris of Crouch End.

But it also demonstrates once more that Muhammad was the promised *Comforter* whose advent was foretold by Christ.

Mrs. Harris had been a Christian for a long time, but that faith did not give her that comfort which her conscience craved for. She could not reconcile herself with the tenets of Christianity that the Almighty and sublime God had begotten a son and then got him murdered on the cross, that three could be one and one three, that the “image of God” had a corrupt soul, that the masterpiece of God’s work was tainted with sin, that for the redemption of that inborn sin, the responsibility of which rested with God Himself, the execution of an innocent man was considered essential, that blood could have any cleansing power, that for communion with God alcoholic drinks were necessary, that salvation did not depend upon personal actions but upon a belief, etc.



She could not reconcile herself with the belief that although the Jews had adopted means to secure, according to Christian notions, the salvation of the whole of mankind by crucifying Christ they should be condemned to hell, or that those rational persons who could not conscientiously have any faith in the unreasonable, and to a certain extent even demoralizing, principles of the Church Christianity would be condemned to eternal perdition, even though they had done good and benevolent works all their life.

In short, Christianity, as preached by the Church to-day, did not comfort her. She found herself in need of a comforter, and *him* she found in Muhammad (may the peace of Allah be upon him), as every thinking person, whether male or female, who could be free from the bondage of the priests, and who would remove all prejudices and superstitions from the mind, would surely find.

She came to know of Islam from her children, who had openly embraced or adopted that soul-comforting and character-elevating faith and system. She came to know that none could withhold the mercy of God which He will freely bestow, that not a grain of good work, either of a male or female, would be wasted, that the righteous shall have neither grief nor sorrow in their after-life and shall get a permanent place in the abode of bliss, rest, and peace, that there was only one Creator and Cherisher of the whole universe and of all the people, that His last messenger had opened the door of salvation to the whole humanity and was the mercy for the worlds. When she learnt of Islam and heard of Muhammad she found them comforting to her soul—the fear of death disappeared from her and a longing arose in her for an everlasting life in an abode of peace. During her lingering illness, when her soul was most in need of a comforter, she found out the Great Comforter and made a solemn will that after her death she should be buried with a Moslem service. Her husband, though not yet an avowed Muslim, respected his beloved wife's last solemnly cherished will, and who knows but that he also may find out soon that the comfort of the soul can only be achieved through the Great Comforter, that the righteous and the God-serving never die, that in after-life there is an Abode of Bliss, and Rest, and Peace for them where they will have the happiness of being face to face with their Maker.



## LEAVES FROM THREE ANCIENT QURANS<sup>1</sup>

BY THE MAULVIE SADR-UD-DIN.

A COMPILATION with the above name, which was trumpeted a good deal before its publication and must have caused a sort of sensation among those people who believe in the indisputable authenticity of the Quran, has seen the light of day. It has been edited by Rev. Alphonse Mingana, D.D., etc., and Agnes Smith Lewis, D.D., etc.

Dr. Agnes Lewis happened to buy a palimpsest in 1895 from a Suez commercial antiquary. The writing was in Arabic character. It was found that there were three writings crossing each other on all its pages. A little patient study revealed to the learned purchaser that one of the writings was from the Quran. She found no less than forty-two words which she thought were wrongly spelt, and as she was prepossessed by the belief that all copies of the Quran are in duty bound to be exactly alike she did not undertake to undo the "tangle of cross writings."

But as providence, or fate, or chance, or that much reviled and misunderstood word "kismet" would have it, another great doctor of learning, "with eyes much younger and sharper," found that one of those forty-two *sics* can have a distinct difference of meaning from the authorized text; and set out on his voyage of new discoveries, like the great Columbus.

The result in the case of Dr. Mingana proved to his friend to be as surprising as in the case of Columbus it was to the world. For over thirteen hundred years the world had been under the conception that the Quran had no variants, but the labour, coupled with a little ingenuity, but unfortunately not much erudition and insight, of Rev. Mingana has proved, to the satisfaction of two great doctors of divinity, that there are a number of "variants," "interpolations," and even "omissions" in the holy scripture.

But to the world at large, and specially to the Muslims, the discovery is nothing more than chimerical, and the labour undertaken by Rev. Mingana, surely with very pious motives, has been simply wasted. In fact, it would not be a matter of

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<sup>1</sup> The article was originally written for *The Asiatic Review*.

surprise if the learned doctor is found to have injured his own reputation for sound judgment, reliable philological research, and scientific investigation, besides giving out to the world that he is not free from religious bigotry and prejudice.

As to the "gift" to Moslems by Dr. Lewis, it would have not made the slightest difference if instead of buying a few stray leaves from a commercial antiquary she would have bought one of the hundreds of thousands of carelessly printed or written copies of the Quran from anywhere in the East and presented it to the Muslim nation, to consider the "variants" in it as a "blessing" to them as, in her opinion, the discovery of variants in the Jewish and Christian sacred books proved to those people.

Rev. Mingana has not only taken pains to decipher an Arabic palimpsest, which he admits to be a very difficult task, but has also added an elaborate, though mostly irrelevant and a little pedantic, introduction of thirty-two pages to the text. In that he has gone out of his way to repeat some very old, and oft-refuted, objections against Islam and Quran, and has shown the same "charity" which his coreligionists always show towards the "antagonistic Faith" and its founder, by piling abuses upon Muhammad. History shows that Muhammad was a man of very genial temperament, that he was loved instinctively by little children, that he always tended the weak and the poor, that he was always first in offering salutations, that he was called the "Mercy for the Worlds" and the Trusty, and that to this day his very name sends a thrill of joy into the hearts of 400,000,000 souls; but Rev. Mingana boldly, and piously of course, says: "what history is unable to find, even in the twentieth century, is a name more terrible than that of *Muhammad*."

This quotation shows in what spirit the research work has been done, and with what object the reverend doctor must have undertaken the labour.

In exposing the work before me, I will not follow Rev. Mingana's example. I should like only to see its philological and historical value. I will leave out of consideration all the irrelevant matter introduced in the introduction, and will confine myself only to the main point, which is, Whether the discoveries of Rev. Mingana successfully assail the world-accepted authenticity and accuracy of the Quran or not?

The first question is, What is the date of the palimpsest? Dr. Agnes Lewis says it is "possibly pre-Othmanic." But



Rev. Mingana says: "We leave the professional palæographers to assign a definite and final date to these various scraps of parchment. . . . Would it be possible to make some portions of our manuscripts go back to a time preceding the epoch in which the Quran has been officially edited in a fixed *textus receptus*? Or, if not, are they perhaps a transcription from some scraps of copies which had escaped the persecuting zeal of 'Othman? A categorical answer, affirmative or negative, would be, on our part, only premature."

When the date of the palimpsest is so uncertain, what value can then be attached to it from a philological or a palæographical point of view? Then, for obvious reasons, these learned doctors have left out of consideration the most probable date of the palimpsest, because if they had taken that in view, they could not have been able to build up even that fanciful superstructure upon it which they have now done.

It is absolutely impossible that any Musalman could have even thought of selling any leaves of the Quran to any non-Muslim. The leaves of the Quran could not be allowed to be touched by unclean hands of the unbelievers. Rev. Mingana has himself referred to this injunction of the Quran, so to think that a Musalman or Musalmans sold the palimpsest to a Christian is extremely far-fetched. In the same way it can hardly be an "escaped" copy from the hands of 'Othman, as the holy places had by that time been cleared of non-Muslims, and no Musalman could have passed it over to an unbeliever of any distant land. Even if there was any such Muslim who did not cherish a very high respect for 'Othman and tried to save his copy of the Quran from the "persecuting zeal of 'Othman," he would have been the last person to go out of the holy places to sell his precious and valuable copy to an unbeliever. In fact, both these theories put forward by Rev. Mingana are fanciful.

The only possibility is that after 'Othman any Musalman from memory wrote these leaves, and made some mistakes in writing them. Then during his *jehads* or travels in Christian lands, he lost the leaves or they were stolen and written upon. But assuming for a minute that the palimpsest is pre-'Othmanic, how can its authenticity be vouched for? The writer might have made mistakes in writing or spelling. Surely a few stray leaves written by some unknown person or

persons cannot be given such an importance as to falsify the authenticity of that version of the Quran, to verify which every human precaution was taken by the Prophet, the *Khalifas*, the *Ashabs*, and the Muslims individually and collectively. Once any verse of the Quran was delivered to the people then even Muhammad himself, if he so desired, could not alter it. It was not only inscribed on leather or parchment, but also memorized by hundreds of Musalmans. It was repeated in the daily prayers of the Muslims, and in the month of Ramazan (fasting month) even to this day the whole of the Quran is recited from memory in the congregational prayers called *Tarawih*. Errors do sometimes creep into books. There are hundreds of copies wrongly printed in existence to-day, but they do not constitute variants. Why should then a few stray leaves be recognized as variants, even if they did have any grave or serious difference from the authorized text? The so-called variants in the palimpsest in question happen to be very insignificant, and to philologists they can have no value from that point.

Rev. Mingana has divided his "variants" into two groups.

First, and these only in fact can be called variants without stretching the meaning of that word to an unreasonable extent, are those which offer a complete word different from that used in the *textus receptus* of the Quran.

Second are those in which there is a difference only of one or two letters or consonants.

The latter are not given any great importance by Rev. Mingana himself. Almost all of them are mistakes in spelling, or they are, as Rev. Mingana calls them, archaic spellings, and do not alter the sense to any appreciable extent, as for example: ضلال , اولك and اولك , والله and الله :

اوليك , واعرض and واعرض , فضل and اولئك , etc. Rev. Mingana admits that the palimpsest has adopted a peculiar kind of spelling of certain words, and

he has given the following examples: شئى for شائى , اذنا for ينالوا , قرآن for قرن



for عليم , اما for انما , يوحى for يوحا , آذانا

عم , but strangely enough he has also inserted some other such peculiarly spelled words in his list which he calls the second group of variants, as for example: ضلال and

and لا يهدى القدم , خبرا and اخبتوا , ضل

اركام and اراكم , انا and انا لا يهدى القدم

واذ and واذا , بل and بل , اثم and اثم

باركنا حوله and باركنا حوله , etc.

As far as the last "variant" is concerned there are many editions of the Quran which have برکنا as the MS. has.





But all Arabic scholars know that بارکنا and برکنا do not make any difference in meaning, and are pronounced alike. The difference is only of calligraphy or style of writing.

To take up the first group of variants to which great importance has been attached, what is seen is that their number in all is not more than four. It has been said that the leaves in question have come from three copies of the Qurans. This then means that a little over one so-called variant occurs in each Quran. This would not be very imposing if the Quran had not enjoyed a unique authenticity and correctness unknown to any other book in the world.

But a close scrutiny of even one of those so-called variants would be sufficient to dispel the idea of there being any real variants from the mind of all but prejudiced and uncultivated persons.



Take, for example, the "variant" الله or اللهم

In the Quran it is الله and means God. But as it stands, or as it has been deciphered, in the MS. it forms a combination of letters without any meaning. The learned doctor has tried to

introduce some meaning to it, but he himself is not certain of that, and says, "unless  (or ) means blow, fist, boxing, it is an obscure word." In fact, there is no word either  or  in the Arabic language. Besides this, Rev.

Mingana has himself shown in the text that this word is one of those many which cannot be fully deciphered; and so he has put, in the text, fol. 150A, the last part of it, which was too dim to be deciphered properly, within brackets with a note of interrogation.

But in spite of that, in his overzeal to find a variant, he has entered the word in his list of variants, and has not only formed a combination of letters different at the end to those in the Quran, but has also given the meaning to it which a word of somewhat same appearance has.

Although there was a plain and obvious explanation of this difference in the MS. and the Quran, Rev. Mingana has overlooked it. The ending of the word  can easily be read into the letter *Kaf* giving the whole word a form of .

The fact that the latter word is meaningless is sufficient proof that the ending flourish should not be read as a separate letter. It has been said in the preface that the Quranic text in the palimpsest seems to have been rubbed with a pumice-stone with a view to erase it altogether. Also that it has two other cross-writings superimposed upon it. Why then, under these circumstances, it became hard for Rev. Mingana to believe that the "obscure word" is simply a corruption of the real letter, either caused by a slip of the pen of the scribe himself or by rubbing it with the pumice-stone or by re-writing upon it? When the clear deciphering of the last portion, which alone makes it differ from the Quran, was found to be impossible, why did he not borrow it from the Quran as he says he has done in other cases, and why has he entered this doubtful and "obscure" word in the list of the variants? These questions can be answered only by Rev. Mingana.

**Now take up the second so-called variant.** The two words are:—



The Quran

The MS.

شكا

شكا

To every observer it will be apparent that they are very similar in writing. The word in the MS. is apparently a corruption of the original word. The dots on the ش came a little too close upon the indentations of the letter, and ش became ش, then there was ش which has been taken for ك (Kaf) and the too close contiguity of the dots of ya have adopted the appearance of لا. The combined effect of this has caused an optical delusion, and the sharp-eyed doctor could not see through it. So the decipherment of لا became لا.

It is very unfortunate that the learned possessor of the palimpsest has temporarily deprived herself of it, and it is not accessible to any critic. When one has to deal with the caligraphy and style of writing one does want to see the original writing; and until that, or an exact facsimile of that, is seen no judgment can be passed upon it.

But this supposed variant can be judged another way, and that is whether the meaning this altered form conveys suits the whole context or not. Rev. Mingana has given only a part of the verse. In the Quranic text, he says, the sentence would mean "They will not take the place of Allah in anything for thee (Muhammad)," while in the MS. it would mean "In derision, they will not take the place of a blow for thee." The meaning put to the Quranic version by Dr. Mingana reveals the fact that although Arabic is said to be his native language, he is far from being conversant with the pure, high, and classical Arabic of the Quran, or with that idiomatic style in which that holy book has been written. If Rev. Mingana had only consulted any of the current translations of the Quran, either that of Sale or Rodwell, he would have found out his mistake. يغفروا

is from *مغنى*, which means place, but *لن يفنوا عنك* cannot mean "not take the place of thee," as he has given the meaning, but it would in that case mean "shall not avail thee," as both Sale and Rodwell have translated.

The *Kamus* has the following instances :—

*غنى عنى* To be in no need of, do without.

*اغنى عن* To suffice (one),  
Stand in stead.

*اغناه عنه* He caused him to be in no need of it.

The learned doctor has managed to introduce some sort of meaning into his deciphered sentence by neglecting the rules of the language and by translating *لن يفنوا عنك* "will not take the place of." If he had given the right meaning to that phrase he would have been confronted with the difficulty that his variant would have become absolutely senseless, so he preferred to risk his own reputation as an Arabic scholar rather than to give up the idea of assailing the authenticity of the Quran by supplying a few variants.

Unfortunately for him his ingenuity avails him nothing, and the meanings he has tried to give to the sentence when read with the whole context of the verse become absurd. As it is it is rather difficult to understand what Rev. Mingana means by "in derision, they will not take the place of a blow, for thee." But when the whole verse is read with the context then the absurdity of this interpretation and "variant" becomes still more clear. The context is as follows :—

"Afterwards we set thee over our divine law: follow it then: and follow not the wishes of those who have no knowledge. For *against God shall they avail thee nothing*. And in sooth, the doers of evil are one another's patrons; but the patron of them that fear Him is God Himself" (Rodwell).

In one more way the great Doctor of Divinity has done harm to his own reputation by his missionary zeal in finding variants in the Quran. Perhaps he does not know that the style in which that sentence is written demands that *شيئا*.



must follow اَغْنِ عَنِ . If he refers to the *Kamus* or Lane's Lexicon he will find the following expressions:—

مَا اَغْنِيْ فُلَانٌ شَيْئًا = such a one did not avail or profit in a difficult affair (The *Kamus*); or such a one did not avail or profit at all in difficult, or an arduous, affair or case; and did not suffice for such an affair or such a case, and for the supply of what was necessary for subsistence (Lane's Lexicon).

If the *Kamus* and Lane's Lexicon were not obtainable, then he could have consulted the Quran itself, and he would have found that *aghna 'an* is invariably followed by *shaian* whenever it is meant to express an emphatic negative, as for example:—

لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ اَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا اَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْئًا

Their wealth shall not profit them anything, nor their children against God (iii. 8).

لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ اَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا اَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْئًا

Their wealth and their children shall avail them nothing against God (iii. 112).

لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْكُمْ فِئَتُكُمْ شَيْئًا

Shall never avail you aught (viii. 19).

فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنْكُمْ شَيْئًا

But it availed you nothing (ix. 25).

لَا يُغْنِيْ عَنْكَ شَيْئًا

Nor profiteth thee aught (xix. 51).

لَا تُغْنِيْ عَنْ شَفَاعَتِهِمْ شَيْئًا

Their intercession will not avert from thee aught (xxxvi. 22).

اَتَمُّ لَنِي يَغْنُوا عَنْكَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْئًا

The master shall not at all be aided by the servant, neither shall they be helped (xliv. 41).

لَا يَفْنَىٰ مَوْلَىٰ عَمَّا مَوْلَىٰ شَيْئًا

For against God shall they avail thee nothing (xliv. 18).

لَا يَفْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا

Their snares shall not at all avail them (lv. 46) (Rodwell).

Rev. Mingana, in his Introduction, says: "In a general sphere of scientific investigation, a man acquainted with historical and philological lucubrations on the sacred book of Islam, knows with certitude that a manuscript offering 'in derision' instead of 'something' deserves respect."

This shows that of his four variants Rev. Mingana is proud of the above, and he is prepared to assail the unique historic accuracy of the Quran by this one "respectable" variant. But as has been shown above, even an ordinary schoolboy could have shown him the absurdity of the sentence which the discovered variant formed.

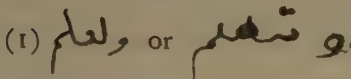
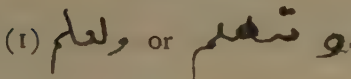
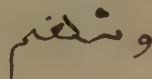


Rev. Mingana had obviously had to labour a good deal to discover at least one such variant which would, in his opinion, make the manuscript as deciphered by him, perhaps at some cost, and published to the world, probably at a still greater cost, "deserve respect," but it can well be called one of the miracles of the Quran that even that one variant which Rev. Mingana managed, with some ingenuity, to put forth should, by internal evidence itself, have proved to be childish and absurd.

Neither changing اللّٰه into an "obscure word" اللّٰك nor *shaian* into *hakman* availed the zealous Doctor of Divinity anything. How rightly and appropriately the very verse of the Quran which has been assailed by Rev. Mingana, proclaims—

اَتَمُّ لَنِي يَغْنُوا عَنْكَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْئًا

For verily they shall avail thee nothing against God.

The other "variants" are:—

The Quran.	The MS.
(1)  or 	
(2) 	or 

As to (1), it can be seen that the first and last letters in both are the same, and the construction is also very similar. Most probably there has been a mistake in decipherment or caligraphy. Besides this, no importance can be attached to it as the so-called variant is only an elective preposition, and does not in the least affect the sense of the sentence. Rev. Mingana admits to have failed to decipher the word which this supposed preposition is to inflect, and which follows it immediately in the context as given on page 12, so that word has been borrowed from the Quran. But in spite of all this Rev. Mingana has found it worth while to put it down as a variant.

#### THE LAST VARIANT.

As to (2), which completes the list of the so-called variants, no importance has been given to it, nor can possibly be given, because both the words convey almost the same meaning. They are sometimes interchangeable also, and are often used by Muslims in their salutations and at the close of their prayers. If the pen of the scribe is not responsible for this supposed variant discovered by Rev. Mingana, then his habit must have been responsible for it.


Now all the "variants" have been accounted for. But the discovery of the Doctor of Divinity does not end with the variants.

#### THREE INTERPOLATIONS.


The Rev. Mingana proceeds to point out three words that are in existence in the orthodox copies of the Quran and are missing in the folios that have been deciphered by him. He does not candidly style them omissions in the folios themselves, but adopts a peculiar line of argument. Because the folios under discussion omit the words mentioned in the *textus receptus*, therefore they should not be, in the opinion of




Rev. Mingana, looked upon as omissions in the folios, but as interpolations in the standard Quran itself. He takes for granted, without any data whatsoever, that the folios in question are beyond any doubt more reliable than the authorized copies of the Quran, and therefore he considers himself entitled to represent the omissions in the folios as so many *interpolations* in the authorized Quran, and a word carelessly added to the script of the folios, as an omission in the present Quran. What a cogent method of reasoning! On the very face of it the whole affair is a studied imposition that has vainly been attempted. We need not enter into a discussion of the historical data that affords convincing proof of a very scrupulous organization for committing the Quran to writing. The very words of the Rev. Mingana go against him. Out of these three omissions in the folios, one has been supplied in the margin of the MS., as has been admitted by our pious critic. He says :

“ Our MS. (fol. 109a) had not the word  (He) originally, but this pronoun has been added in the margin by a different hand.” In other words, he confesses that out of the three alleged interpolations in the authorized Quran one is not such, but is an omission in the MS. itself, for it was afterwards (perhaps when revised by the scribe, or somebody else) put in the margin, thus making the context tally with the authorized version.

But if the scribe, or the amateur writer, was liable to omit one word, why was he not liable to omit two more?

Let us, however, examine the so-called interpolations for their intrinsic worth, and see whether their introduction serves any purpose. One of them,  , is admitted to have been inserted in the MS. This is only a pronoun that stands for the word *Allah* that precedes it. What can be the value of such an interpolation? It is simply puerile to catch hold of these slips and force them into interpolations.

The other supposed interpretation is the word  (i.e. all, adv.), which is repeated in the verse at issue in the text of the Quran, and is wanting in the script of the MS. Even a child who knew Arabic could say that it was an omission in the folio, and that the lack of it renders the sentence not only awkward but incomplete. If such mistakes

or omissions on the part of amateur scribes can put our critic in possession of data sufficient to entitle him to say that words have found their way into the text of the Quran, he can perhaps prove the whole Quran to be imaginary by collecting omissions in the innumerable printed and MS. copies of the Quran that are current.

The third of the Rev. Mingana's alleged interpolations is **لِمَ**, which means "why." While dealing with this word the

critic remarks that "Here the words **لِمَ** are omitted (i.e. in the manuscript); they do not suit the context." If the word "why" does "not suit" the context, why should a devotee of the Quran think of marring the unparalleled beauty of his scripture by the introduction of such an unnecessary word? A perusal of the verse will be sufficient to convince everybody that the omission of the word "why" in the MS. is an obvious error.

#### AN ALLEGED OMISSION.

It is very difficult indeed to give credit for honest and frank work when one examines with any carefulness the compilation put forth by Rev. Mingana.

In his Introduction he says that he has found certain omissions (in the plural) in the Quran, but he gives only one instance of omission, i.e. in the Suratun Nahl xvi. 25 of the Quran, the word **الله** (God) does not occur, but it has been found, he says, in the palimpsest.

The sentence given in the MS. is **وَكُلٌّ يَضِلُّ مِّنْ يَّشَاءُ**

The Quran has it thus **وَكُلٌّ يَضِلُّ مِّنْ يَّشَاءُ**. Rev. Mingana has separated the sentence from its context, otherwise he would not have missed the word. The whole verse runs thus:—

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَكُلٌّ يَضِلُّ مِّنْ يَّشَاءُ  
وَيَهْدِي مِّنْ يَّشَاءُ وَلَتَسْأَلُنَّ عَالِمَ الْغَيْبِ

There was no need for repeating the word **الله** again in

the sentence. If the version in the MS. were correct, then it would have necessitated a further repetition of the same word after *vahdi*, so the whole sentence would have contained the same word thrice, thus:—

ولو شاء الله جعلكم امة واحدة ولكن ليضل الله من يشاء ويهدي الله من يشاء  
ولتسئلن عما كنتم تعملون +

If Rev. Mingana had given the whole sentence instead of only a portion of it, his object of being able to flourish a supposed omission in the Quran would have been frustrated, and everybody could have found out that it was not the Quran that had omitted one word, but it was the scribe of the MS. who had by mistake added one such word which was not required there at all.

In fact it was with a view to avoid such mistakes that the great Prophet, who was meant to be the last prophet and whose teachings were for that reason made perfectly immune from corruption, did not depend upon writing alone to immortalize the purity and authenticity of the holy Quran, but he got it inscribed on the tablets of thousands of living hearts.

It cannot be a matter of any surprise if this everlasting miracle of the Quran that it has remained absolutely unaltered, pure and uncorrupted, for over thirteen centuries; and that it has become impossible to treat it as other holy books had been treated, creates a pang of jealousy in the hearts of all those who cannot trust the authenticity of their own inspired books. But to let that jealousy get the upper hand while treating an important literary, philological, and antiquarian work of research and to deliberately and methodically mislead people can never be pardonable. Mountains have been made of mole-hills, clerical errors have been magnified into variants, obscure words given a place of plain words, meanings of words distorted, etc., with a view to assail the authenticity of the Quran.

It would have been possible to be charitable, and Rev. Mingana could have been excused because of his obvious ignorance, not only of the methods of scientific, philological, and antiquarian research, but also of the classical expressions of the Arabic language, if he had not made palpably apparent



efforts to mislead people and to conceal the real value of the stray leaves which Dr. Lewis got from a commercial antiquary of unknown credentials.

Dr. Lewis had, with her feminine intuition, judged the correct philological value of this Quranic palimpsest, and had attributed the so-called variants, discovered afterwards by Rev. Mingana, to the mistakes in spelling. All her Arabist friends and all Oriental readers of No. 1 *Studies sinaitica* had never made any suggestion during the eleven years that had elapsed since that book was published, that the subject might repay further investigation.

But Dr. Mingana, by an ingenious handling of the spelling and caligraphical mistakes, and by an imposing although biased and irrelevant Introduction, has tried his best to attach an uncommon value to those leaves. But he has failed, and none but the ignorant would attach any importance to them. The position of the Book of God remains unshaken and shall always remain so.

انهم لي يفتروا عنك من الله شيئا

For verily against God shall they avail thee nothing.

## REVIEW

THE DIWAN OF INAYAT KHAN. (The Sufi Publishing Society, Ltd., 100D Addison Road, London, W. 2s. 6d.)

THIS little garland of Sufi songs, composed by Inayat Khan and rendered into English verse by Miss Jessie Duncan Westbrook, is the expression of the different aspects of Sufic thought and feeling. Some of the verses are didactic—the spiritual teacher exhorting his disciple; others, such as “The Caravan,” are traditional symbolic tales. Some of the poems are the efforts of the Sufi to interpret earthly life and its relations as shadows and emblems of the life of the soul. The author, Inayat Khan, is a musician, and in these songs we seem to recognize the voice of the singer endeavouring in the ecstasy of his soul to obtain and to place himself completely *en rapport* with Divine Wisdom. The verses on “The Oneness of Allah” are undoubtedly a grand rendering in verse of the Eternal Truth, “Allah is One Alone!” The little volume is exceedingly well got up, and enriched with a well-executed frontispiece in true Oriental style.

## A GLANCE AT THE QURANIC PALIMPSEST

By AL-QIDWAI

THE palimpsest of the Quran deciphered by Dr. Mingana cannot be given any importance, for the following few out of many reasons :—

1. The age of the palimpsest, which is of chief importance, has been left undecided ; and as no facsimile or photograph of all the leaves has been given, no other person can satisfy himself by his own examination as to the probable age of the palimpsest, whether it can even “possibly” be pre-‘Othmanic or not.

2. The internal evidence which can be gathered from the writings of Dr. Mingana himself, and from the three leaves, a rough photograph of which has been given, shows that the palimpsest in question is not pre-‘Othmanic, because :—

(a) Diacriticals which were invented much after ‘Othman are found in it.

(b) The style and caligraphy are not pre-‘Othmanic, and looked at with a palæographical eye the palimpsest cannot be older than the eighth century A.C.

(c) The Kufo-Noskhi letters, in which Dr. Mingana says a part of the palimpsest is written, came into existence much after ‘Othman.

3. The reasons given by Dr. Lewis for believing them to be pre-‘Othmanic are based on ignorance.

One of the injunctions of the Quran is لا يمسها الا الطاهر


(Do not touch it unless you are clean). No Musalman of that zealous age could disobey that injunction and sell the Quranic leaves to the unclean hands of an unbeliever. Obviously Dr. Lewis does not know that writing out the Quran was considered to be a pious work, and that many devout Muslim sovereigns like Abdul Malik and Aurengzeb made it one of their pious occupations. She therefore writes : “We therefore cannot imagine any one attempting the useless task of writing out a text like ours after the time of ‘Othman.”

During the lifetime of Muhammad himself, by a special

injunction of the Quran, the holy places were cleared of all the unbelievers, so the theory advanced that some Muslim during the time of 'Othman sold this old copy to any Christian falls to the ground.

4. The palimpsest was acquired from very suspicious hands, and can have no legal value. From an antiquarian point of view also there is every possibility of its having been faked.

5. The internal evidence of the effort to erase the Quranic writing and the super-imposition of Christian Homilies is a sufficient proof that the palimpsest fell into very bigoted non-Muslim hands, and therefore even if there were no other proof showing its worthlessness, the very fact of its having remained in bigoted hands would have destroyed its value as a genuine article. Even at its best it could but be a very poor means of attacking thirteen-centuries-old unchallenged and unique authenticity and accuracy of the authorized Quran, the correctness of which was verified and certified with every human care that could possibly be taken during the time of Muhammad and his immediate successors.

6. The age, name, or position of the scribe is altogether unknown, and there is internal proof that even if he was a Musalman he was not a master of the art of writing, and has made a good many clerical mistakes. He probably wrote it from memory some time after 'Othman to keep a correct version in his family, but he was not learned enough to differentiate in writing between the singular and plural of such words as  which are both pronounced alike.

7. The so-called variations can all be satisfactorily explained away as due to clerical mistakes or to doubtful reading. They seem to have accrued either by the slip of the pen of the scribe, or because of the effort to rub off the Quranic writing on the vellum by a Christian fanatic, or through cross super-impositions.

8. Not a single letter or word in the MS. which a little too "youthful and sharp" eye of Dr. Mingana has taken to compose a variant could, even if it were otherwise unaccountable, alter in the least any substantial import of the prevailing Quran. The so-called variants do not occur in any such part of the Quran which is mandatory or which affects the faith, the



laws, the history, or even the rituals of the Muslim, or which in any way deals with the objects of the holy book itself.

9. Dr. Lewis went to the wrong man for the decipherment of the Quranic palimpsest. Dr. Mingana might be a very enthusiastic Christian, he may have not only youthful and sharp eyes, but may be sharp from head to foot; Arabic might be his native language, and he may be very proficient in colloquial Syrian; he may be a clever and ingenious writer, but his work shows that he is ignorant of Islamic history and traditions, that he can be blind even to obvious explanations, that he is not familiar with high and classical Arabic, and that philology and palæography are not very strong points in his scholarship.

10. The introduction written by Dr. Mingana is an evidence that he was as much biased towards Islam and Quran and Muhammad as the monk who tried to rub out the Quranic writing from the palimpsest, and super-imposed it with Christian Homilies. Dr. Mingana has by that introduction given a proof that he was not the right man to be entrusted with literary research work, because he could not conduct it without religious bias and bigotry. It is evident that he undertook the decipherment of the leaves of the Quranic palimpsest with prejudice-coloured glasses on his eyes and found variants where there were no real variants. It appears that he has used his imagination as well as his eyes in deciphering obscure parts of the palimpsest.

## A FEW THOUGHTS ON INSPIRED WRITINGS

By LORD HEADLEY

THERE are many Christians who believe in the absolute truth of every word in the Old and New Testaments. There are greater numbers who, whilst doubtful about much of the Old Testament, believe implicitly in the whole of the New Testament from the first chapter of St. Matthew to the conclusion of the Book of Revelation. There are yet others—and these are probably comprised in the largest class of religionists—who accept only their own readings of both sacred volumes or those portions which agree with their own views. Of the

many excellent people who would be shocked at a suggestion that they doubted the authenticity or truth of the Bible some cannot bring themselves to believe in miracles such as "Jonah and the whale," "Walking on the water," etc.; others cannot accept the Immaculate Conception or the Atonement. It is not difficult, therefore, to understand that dogmatic teachings, based on widely different readings or interpretations of *the same translations of inspired writings* have led to the establishment of religious sects *fundamentally at variance*. All religions are based on traditions, sacred writings, and human consciousness of right and wrong. In every age so much depends upon the standpoint from which we regard our authorities and the importance we attach to revelations and inspirations.

It will not, I hope, be considered controversial or contentious if I say that a religion without charity is worthless—whatever interpretations may be put on the Scriptures. Then we have something to go on: an axiom. "Religion without charity is worthless." Charity and toleration are very nearly akin to one another; indeed, a charitable person in the fullest sense must be able to tolerate those who hold different views, say, in the matter of religion, and should not condemn them because they see things from a different standpoint. I do not, of course, refer to the misnamed toleration which winks at cruelty, deception, or fraud, or the foolish leniency which indiscriminately pardons murderers or brutal miscreants. My allusion is to that very important and real charity which allows that salvation is possible for all good people who believe in God and do their duty to their neighbours.

One can *understand* the outrageously excessive punishment—once common in this country—of hanging a man for stealing a sheep, because the theft was against the laws of God and man; but it is difficult to realize what must have been the frame of mind of those who burnt and tortured their fellow-creatures for a mere difference of religious belief *unaccompanied by any crime whatever*. I can almost hear the remark: "These tortures and burnings belong to another age—we don't do these things now." No, perhaps not, but I would ask one simple question: "Which is the most or least charitable—to burn a fellow-creature's body, as did the zealous Christians of the Holy Inquisition, or to consign his entire being, body, soul, and spirit to everlasting damnation as do many of the modern Christians?" A man

transgresses no law, human or divine, when he confesses his inability to believe in the divinity of Christ, the Trinity, the Atonement, or the efficacy of the Sacraments as being *necessary to salvation*. And yet good Christians still positively affirm that such a man cannot be saved, and this is equivalent to consigning him to everlasting perdition. One fails to see where the charity comes in: if it does come in it is not a bit like that charity which, according to St. Paul, "edifieth," "suffereth long and is kind," "thinketh no evil," "rejoiceth in the truth," "endureth all things," "never faileth," etc.; and yet we find those very people, who would be horrified at the idea of not accepting St. Paul's teachings, absolutely callous and wanting in the first principles of charity when it comes to dealing with the everlasting state of a human soul. Possibly there may be different kinds of charity to suit different religious opinions. For myself I only know that I have been repeatedly informed that I cannot be saved—*not because of my sins*—for which I very possibly deserve to be damned—but *because of my inability to blindly agree to certain dogmatic statements and improbabilities handed down to the clergy by their predecessors in the early days of Christianity*. Surely there must be something out of joint in religions which seek to bind the intelligence and do not appeal to the heart? The learned divines in different Christian sects are so much at variance in their readings of Scripture that from their writings and preachings it is hard to realize that they belong to the same Church. The Church of Rome, the Greek Church, the Protestants, Anglicans, and all the minor sects are led by the same Scriptures, and I suppose that the Holy Quran which contains so much in confirmation and extension of the Bible is a closed book to them all. But why this narrow-mindedness? Why this refusal to study a work which is regarded as sacred and inspired by so many millions of the human race? Who can read the following without feeling the inspiration?—

"God! There is no God but He; the Living, the Eternal; nor slumber seizeth Him nor sleep; His, whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever in the earth! Who is he that can intercede with Him but by His own permission? He knoweth what hath been before them and what shall be after them; yet naught of His knowledge shall they grasp, save what He willeth. His Throne reacheth over the heavens and the earth, and the



upholding of both burdeneth Him not; He is the High, the Mighty."

The Quran abounds in such passages divinely inspired and suited for the guidance of mankind for all time, and it is to be hoped that those who study the Bible will also read the sacred Book of Arabia. We want the spirit of Islam in the West. The Holy Prophet Muhammad was ever chivalrous, fair, and tolerant, and we could not do better than emulate the example he set us. Unfortunately there is a strong tendency on the part of the followers of any great teacher to fall away from the original spirit of the teaching. Who can say that those who burnt their fellow-Christians at the stake in this country not so many years ago were true followers of Christ? Where was the spirit of toleration, where the spirit of charity so strongly and frequently enjoined by the Holy Prophet of Nazareth? With my dear brothers, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din and the Maulvie Sadr-ud-Din, and other sincere Muslims, I pray most earnestly that the pure and simple faith of Islam may be so presented in all Western countries that ultimately the whole world may become Muslim. We have seen that Christianity—a religion from the East—has in past centuries spread over the Western world, and there appears to be no reason whatever why Islam, also a religion of the East, unhampered by dogmas and ceremonies, should not take its place in countries where there is a tendency to abandon religion altogether, or where sacerdotalism has exhausted the public patience and insulted its intelligence. Islam is not handicapped by priestcraft and heavy calls on the credulity, and it should find favour amongst the learned and scientific as well as with the untutored and simple-minded.

## REVIEW

**Leaves from Three Ancient Qurans possibly Pre-'Othmanic.** Edited by Rev. Alphonse Mingana, D.D., and Agnes Smith Lewis, Hon. D.D., etc.

IN this work the editors publish what they claim to be the contents of some manuscript copies of the Quran, which they consider may be of pre-'Othmanic age.

It is obvious that if the documents are of the age the editors are of opinion can be attributed to them, they are valuable

and interesting from an antiquarian point of view, and are far from being devoid of interest to the philologist; accordingly we applied to Dr. Agnes S. Lewis, the owner of the documents, for permission to inspect the same, and in reply to such request received a courteous reply from that lady regretting her inability, at present, to produce the documents in question, inasmuch as the same were detained in Germany, they having been sent to that country, prior to the war, for exhibition at Leipzig.

Not being able to have inspection of the original documents, we are therefore forced simply to consider the same as they appear in the book before us.

The publishers of the work (Drs. Mingana and Agnes S. Lewis) practically acknowledge that their object in the publication of the same is by this means to attack the authenticity of the text of the Quran, which, to quote their own words, "as it now stands has obtained a position of unique and unchallenged authority over the Muslim world."

The position of the two editors is, therefore, analogous to that of a claimant in a law court who attempts to set aside a document, which for thirteen centuries "has obtained and retained a position of unique and unchallenged authority," by propounding other documents which he alleges to be of an earlier date and more credible authority than the document which he thus seeks to impugn.

The most satisfactory mode of inquiry into such a claim is manifestly such an one as would be conducted in a law court. Two great first principles of English law are:—

1. That the plaintiff, or claimant, *must prove* his case, and
2. That innocence must be presumed until guilt is proved.

These are supplemented by the further rule,

3. That the defendant is always entitled to the benefit of any doubt there may be.

Keeping these principles well in mind, let us now test the case put forward by Drs. Mingana and Agnes S. Lewis, upon whom, they being the claimants, lies the *onus probandi*.

In propounding a document in a law court whereby and whereunder you seek to impeach a deed, hitherto considered to be of "unique and unchallenged authority," the claimant must satisfactorily prove:—

1. From whence such document was derived.
2. By whose authority it was uttered.

3. The authority of the utterer to so utter the same.

4. In whose custody such document has been from the specific time of its utterance until its presentation to the court, so as to clearly demonstrate, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that it has never been tampered with.

All this lies upon the claimant, the propounder of the document, to prove, and if he fails in one single point, his case fails in its entirety.

Let us see if in the book now before us for consideration this is attempted to be done, and if so with what, if any, success.

The statement of Dr. Agnes S. Lewis, as to how she became possessed of "these precious documents," is *in her own words* (Preface, p. v) as follows:—

"The manuscript from which these leaves are taken was bought by me at Suez from a commercial antiquary on his travels in 1895." . . . "How did this manuscript come into my hands? And why should I have put it under the eyes of Dr. Mingana? . . . I leave others to explain this. Some may attribute it to what Moslems call 'Kismet,' which is not exactly the same as what the Christians regard as Providence."

This is *all* we are permitted to know about the origin of these documents!

In other words, we are asked to give serious attention to documents, some of which Dr. Agnes S. Lewis herself admits, "have suffered so much from age and neglect that they have become indecipherable," purchased ten years ago at Suez from a nameless "commercial antiquary on his travels"!

A nameless wanderer from no one knows where, and whose present *locale*, "whether in the flesh or out of the flesh," we know not!

Any one who has resided for any fair length of time in Constantinople, Jerusalem, Cairo, or Suez has probably encountered one or more of these gentry termed "commercial antiquaries," and the result of an acquaintance therewith has generally, one might say almost invariably, resulted in a firm conviction that while their "commercialism" can not be questioned, their "antiquarianism" (save on the commercial side) and their honesty and good faith can fairly be designated by the algebraical sign of  $x$  as representing the unknown quantity.

The minor members of the "commercial antiquary" frater-



nity can supply you with miniature crosses "made of wood of the cedars of Lebanon or thorn bushes growing in the garden of Gethsemane"; such crosses, however, bearing a striking family resemblance to those manufactured in Switzerland or Germany. Others of the same ilk, if you are interested in Egyptology, can provide you with "genuine scarabs," etc., "obtained from the tombs of the Pharaohs," "thousands of years old," but suspiciously resembling similar articles manufactured by the gross in Birmingham. The more adventurous of these "commercial antiquaries" can supply you with palimpsest MSS. and other scripts, all "of undoubted extreme age," and their ingenuity in explaining how they "found" these precious documents "in their travels," demonstrates most clearly and distinctly beyond the possibility of a doubt that the art of the construction of fiction did not expire in the Orient with the demise of the author of "The Thousand and One Nights." Some sixty years or so ago it was the lost "Book of Jasher" that was discovered "hidden away in the library of a Syrian monastery," "written on vellum in primitive Hebrew characters"! In quite recent years we have had the discovery of "The Gospel of St. Peter" announced with a flourish of trumpets as an important "find."

Any one who has sufficient curiosity and time to waste may examine a printed translation in English of this precious "discovered" "Book of Jasher," in the Corporation Free Library at Liverpool, the Bodleian Library at Oxford, or at the British Museum.

Does any philologist or antiquarian of repute attach the slightest importance to such a document to-day?

When, therefore, we know that the documents now propounded were obtained in the manner which Dr. Agnes S. Lewis candidly confesses they were procured, we cannot be accused of undue scepticism if we regard them as we would "a genuine old master" or "a veritable Sidney Cooper" offered to us as "a bargain" by a picture-dealer more distinguished for his audacity than his integrity.

The derivation of the propounded documents under consideration is therefore more than doubtful—it is extremely suspicious.

The name and authority of the author or the utterer is unknown, and apparently unascertainable, and the place

wherein the documents have lain since they were concocted, whether the time of such concoction be thirteen centuries ago or within the last few decades, is similarly veiled in obscurity.

Such are the documents propounded for the serious consideration of philologists and antiquarians, and by whose instrumentality the authenticity of the text of a work, which for thirteen centuries has held "a position of unique and unchallenged authority over the Muslim world," is sought to be impugned!

We are aware that in the preface to the book under consideration it is stated that the upper script of this precious palimpsest has been "pronounced by Dr. Cowley of Oxford, and Mr. Ellis, who was then at the British Museum, to be written in a style which is assigned to the very end of the ninth century or to the beginning of the tenth, and which was in vogue for a very short time."

That is to say about three hundred years *after* the death of 'Othman.

But what of this?

The paragraph, as it stands, is illuminating, not so much for what it says, but for what it omits to state.

Dr. Cowley and Mr. Ellis state that the document, or rather let us say *one* of the documents, is "*written in a style which is assigned,*" etc.; but they carefully refrain from vouching for its genuineness! A clever forger can imitate a writing or style of any age.

Thomas Chatterton, a charity school-boy, in 1768 forged documents purporting to have been written in the fifteenth century by "Thos. Rowley, a priest of Bristol," and performed his work so cleverly that a skilled antiquarian accepted them as genuine.

What a charity school-boy with but little learning and indifferent materials could accomplish one hundred and fifty years ago, would be mere child's play for one of the skilled scribes, who are not unknown to be employed by some of the "commercial antiquaries in the Orient."

The locality (Suez), where these documents were obtained, does not enjoy an enviable reputation for the genuineness of the antiquities and curiosities therein vended.

So much for the authenticity of the documents. Let us now consider the probabilities of the ingenious theory pro-

pounded by Dr. Agnes S. Lewis in the preface of the book. It is, *in her own words*, as follows:—

"We think that these leaves are pre-Othmānic for this reason. Muhammad, when he believed that he was receiving supernatural revelations, employed Zaid ibn Thābit to write them down for him, and this Zaid did, on potsherds, palm-leaves, strips of vellum, or whatever came handy. No doubt copies of the different Sūrahs were afterwards made by Zaid himself, when sufficient writing material had been obtained. It is not surprising if these contained some mistakes in spelling; especially as the rules of Arabic grammar were not then fixed. But after Muhammad's death, Abu Bekr and Othmān had all these writings properly copied out and arranged in the form with which we have become familiar. In this work, be it noted, they had the help of Zaid. Othmān then ordered all the earlier copies to be destroyed; and the text of the Qurān, as it now stands, obtained a position of unique and unchallenged authority over the Moslem world. We therefore cannot imagine any one attempting the useless task of writing out a text like ours after the time of Othmān.

Putting all the facts together, as they are known to ourselves, or as they have been handed down to us by a credible tradition, we think that these vellum leaves, now happily my property, were amongst those whose destruction was ordered by Othmān and was incumbent on all true believers in Islām. There are two ways of destroying manuscripts. The most effectual one is by burning; but in those early days vellum was scarce—especially in the desert—the papyrus reed had disappeared, having been utterly uprooted for the needs of literary folk; and paper was unknown except in China. The owner of Qurāns which had been prematurely written was surely justified in thinking that if he got rid of their text, by means of pumice-stone or otherwise, the attenuated vellum might remain, and its price might help to equip himself for a *jehād*. By sale therefore, or barter, this one passed into the hands of Christian monks; and then, towards the end of the ninth century, it was written clearly over with choice extracts from the Fathers of the Church; the pages being folded double, and some of them being clipped to a smaller size to make them fit with those of the *Transitus Mariæ*. I think it very probable that the writer of the second script did not suspect that any of the vellum he used had an earlier text on it. . . . There is no record, so far as I know, of the history of such documents; for in most cases their owners would never notice how long a period had elapsed between the effacement of the first writing and its reappearance."

The theory, thus propounded by Dr. Agnes S. Lewis, presumes that some Muslim in the time of 'Othman so disobeyed the orders of the Khaliph (which order, be it observed, Dr. Agnes Lewis herself admits *was incumbent on all true believers in Islam*), as to ineffectually efface a few pages of a then existent copy of a portion of the Quran, and having so done, subsequently sold "the attenuated vellum," that "its price might help to equip himself for a *jehād*"!

The promulgation of such a theory shows clearly that the propounder of the same possesses an extremely scanty knowledge of early Muslim history and still less of Islamic feeling and customs. So strong was the veneration for the Prophet and his commands, and for the orders of the early Khaliphs, at the period referred to, that such a thing happening as is



suggested by Dr. Agnes S. Lewis is unthinkable to the unbiased student of Islamic history.

It is narrated that on one occasion, when the Prophet was preaching in the mosque at Medina, he, addressing those therein assembled, said, "Sit down," whereupon they all instantly obeyed. The sound of the Prophet's clear voice, which "like a silver clarion rung," reached the ears of a Muslim, who was walking across the street at some 40 or 50 yards' or so distance from the mosque. Without a moment's hesitation, he immediately sat down in the street, at the identical spot at which he was standing when he heard the command. A passer-by, seeing him thus seated heedless of the traffic which was passing, asked him, "Why do you thus sit there?" His reply was, "I heard the Prophet say, 'Sit down,' and I at once obeyed his order."

"But his lordship was speaking to those in the mosque and directing *them* to sit down; it would have been sufficient if you had crossed the street and entered the mosque and then sat down," said his friend. "I might have died before I reached the door of the mosque, and at the bar of final judgment I should have stood condemned for having disobeyed the Prophet's command. Do you think I was going to peril my immortal soul in that manner? The Prophet said, 'Sit down,' and I instantly obeyed him," replied the faithful and fervent True-Believer in Islam.

Is it probable, then, that for the sake of the cost of a few pieces of vellum that any "True-Believer in Islam" would so disobey the command of 'Othman, as is suggested by Dr. Agnes S. Lewis? These people were prepared to, and often did, sacrifice their life for the faith.

The man who is ready to give his life for Islam is scarcely the person to act as is suggested by Dr. Agnes S. Lewis.

Furthermore, it is a command of Islam that the Quran must not be handled by unclean hands.

Would any Muslim of that day, then, sell a piece of vellum, which at any time had been honoured and enriched by having a portion of the Quran written thereon, to any person whereby it might have "passed into the hands of Christian monks"?

To those who know Islam, and who have lived amongst Muslims, or who understood Muslim feeling, such a proposition is too absurd to be designated by words.

If the documents are aught but forgeries more or less skil-

fully concocted, which there are undoubtedly grounds for some suspecting them to be, then there is a mode whereby portions of the Quran might at some time or other, long *after* the death of 'Othman, have been written as these scripts are alleged to be.

Some Muslim, fervent, but not too literate, or possibly not over-skilled in caligraphy, may have written down on sheets of vellum portions of Quran, either from memory or copied from another MS., and in his unskilfulness or ignorance made some caligraphic errors and slips therein.

Educated persons in England, even learned Doctors of Divinity, have been known to make slips in spelling and in grammar. Shakespeare is said to have signed his name in six different modes of spelling.

What is regarded as "an interesting eccentricity of genius" in England's greatest poet and dramatist can surely not be stigmatized as a heinous crime in an unknown caligraphist of centuries ago?

In a book styled "Mount Calvary," written in Cornish prior to that language becoming practically defunct, the word *môr*, sea, is written in three distinct ways, thus:—*moar*, *moer*, *moyr*. Beyond regarding this eccentricity of the author as an interesting philological fact, does any one attach any importance to the same?

A document so penned by some such Muslim caligraphist, after his death may have "passed into the hands of Christian monks," who in their fanatical zeal against Islam were just the persons who would be most likely to seek to obliterate from the vellum, by "rubbing down with pumice-stone" all traces of the words of the Quran, which to them would be *anathema*, and subsequently occupying themselves in the, to them, congenial task of inscribing upon the sheets, from which they had thus expurgated all traces of the Arabic text, the homilies of some venerated Father of their own Church.

One can quite believe that Christian monks of the age referred to, would regard the accomplishment of such a task as a sacred duty and a highly meritorious work.

History records how a certain cardinal ordered the destruction of priceless Arabic manuscripts in Spain, because they were written in that language, and therefore "must be either Qurans or commentaries thereupon."

If a cardinal considered that such a work of destruction was

a Christian duty, we can readily conceive the probability of Christian monks in Syria diligently eliminating by the aid of pumice-stone portions of the, to them, hated and detested "Muslim Bible," and utilizing the vellum "in those early days when vellum was scarce" for the transcript thereupon of "choice extracts from the Fathers of the Church." Surely this is a more probable mode of accounting for the present appearance of these documents than that advanced by the lady editor of the work under consideration.

Let us now consider what the editors describe as "variants" between this palimpsest and the recognized and orthodox text of Quran, and see if they amount to anything of real moment or importance.

The first one cited by Dr. Mingana (p. xxxvii) is from *Sûratul-Jathiah* ("The Kneeling," revealed at Mecca), xiv. v. 18, and deals with the word rendered *shaian* in the Quran, but appearing as *hakm* in these "commercial antiquary" documents.

Dr. Mingana assigns the following meanings to these words:—*shaian*, "something"; *hakm*, "in (their derision)."

In the same *ayat* the word *Allah* (God) in Quran appears in the manuscript as *allakm*, translated by Dr. Mingana as "a blow."

Dr. Mingana himself admits that "unless *allakm* means blow, fist, boxing, it is an obscure word," but surely as "a learned Assyrian scholar, whose native language is Arabic," he knows that no such word as *allakm* exists in that language? *Allakm* as an Arabic word is not "obscure," it is non-existent, it is pure and unadulterated jargon!

Why does not Dr. Mingana, "a learned Assyrian scholar, whose native language is Arabic," openly and honestly confess this?

Instead of so doing, he terms it "obscure," and in order to endeavour to make something out of a non-Arabic word he falls back upon the term *lakm*, a blow, and seeks by this forced and unnatural construction, unworthy of any philologist of repute, to attempt to contend that these manuscripts emanating from no one knows where, and obtained by a "commercial antiquary" no one knows how, are "pre-'Othmanic," and are to be set up as authorities to impugn the text of the Quran, as accepted by the whole Muslim world for over thirteen centuries! Could the force of folly further go?

Let us for a moment compare Dr Mingana's translation of



the whole of the *ayat* with that of other translators, in order that we can fully comprehend the enormous gulf which lies between this "learned Assyrian scholar, whose native language is Arabic," this self-appointed twentieth-century "Daniel come to judgment," and such world-renowned scholars as George Sale and J. M. Rodwell. Speaking of Rodwell's translation of the Quran, Professor G. Margoliouth (who cannot be accused of pro-Islamic tendencies) says: "Rodwell's rendering (of the Quran) is one of the best that have as yet been produced. It seems to a great extent to carry with it the atmosphere in which Muhammed lived, and its sentences are imbued with the flavour of the East. . . . Not the least among its recommendations is, perhaps, that it is scholarly without being pedantic—that is to say, that it aims at correctness without sacrificing the right effect of the whole to over-insistence on small details." Such is Professor Margoliouth's opinion of Rodwell's translation.

Dr. Mangana's opinion, however, judging from the volume before us, would appear to be somewhat different.

The *ayatin* preceding the particular passage in question, in Rodwell's translation run thus:—

"To the children of Israel gave We of old the Book and the Wisdom, and the gift of Prophecy, and We supplied them with good things, and privileged them above all peoples.

"And we gave them clear sanctions for our behests; neither did they differ through mutual envy, till after they had become possessed of knowledge; but thy Lord will judge between them on the day of resurrection, as to the subject of their disputes.

"Afterwards we set thee (O Muhammed) over our Divine law; follow it then; and follow not the wishes of those who have no knowledge, *For against God shall they avail thee nothing.*"

Sale translates the same *ayat* thus:—

"Verily they shall not avail thee against God at all."

Dr. Mingana renders this *ayat* thus:—

"They will not take the place of Allah in anything for thee (Muhammed)."

Be it noted that whereas Dr. Mingana previously translated *shai'an* as "something," he now renders it as "anything," and this within the space of eleven lines in his own book. His translation may be correct as a literal rendering word by word of the text, but it certainly, to any dispassionate observer and

student other than Dr. Mingana himself and such as pin their faith upon him, appears crude, inelegant, and lacking in the interpretation of the spirit of the *ayat* in question.

His rendering of the passage as inscribed in the manuscript is: "In derision, they will not take the place of a blow, for thee."

Dr. Mingana does not quote the preceding *ayatin*. This is wise on his part, for had he so done, the comparison of this Minganite version with the context would show its utter non-sequence and inappropriateness.

We venture to think that the verdict of those who do dispassionately consider the text of the original Quran, and that of these "commercial antiquarian" procured documents will be to apply, in paraphrase, "the learned Assyrian scholar's" translation to himself and to exclaim: "In derision, they will not take the place of a blow (for Islam but) for thee (O Mingana) !

Space will not permit us to wade through 75 pages of Arabic and 42 pages of an English "Introduction" of this kind of matter, nor will we weary our readers' patience or insult their intelligence by so doing.

Dr. Mingana in his "Introduction" (p. xxxvi), states that the work contains "some interesting various readings, and some omissions which will astonish more than one scholar."

We agree with him, but we venture to believe that the astonishment of the scholar will not be exactly of the kind desired by the "learned Assyrian scholar" and "late Professor of Semitic Languages and Literature in the Syro-Chaldean Seminary at Mosul," but rather will be at the egregious folly of those who have attempted to dim the blazing and eternal light of a Book which has lasted unchanged and uncorrupted for over thirteen centuries by endeavouring to hold up, in opposition thereto, a miserable farthing rushlight, which at the first puff of hostile criticism ignominiously expires, leaving nought but an objectionable odour behind it to remind one of its transitory existence.

In conclusion, while we at once acquit Dr. Agnes S. Lewis of any desire to act otherwise than honourably in the matter, we feel convinced that she has simply found "a mare's nest."

We regret that we cannot regard Dr. Mingana's efforts in the matter with quite the same favourable consideration. He is (so Dr. Agnes S. Lewis informs us) "a learned Assyrian scholar,

whose native language is Arabic"; and we therefore think that in the interests of his reputation as a philologist, if for no other cogent reason, it would have been wiser for him not to have permitted his fanatical zeal against Islam (over and over again pointedly manifested in the "Introduction" penned by him) to have over-run his discretion.

We can only regard the book before us as a pitiable exposure of how valuable time and energy can be wasted and money absolutely thrown away in the pursuit of a *wahm*, a chimera.

As we close the book, there forcibly comes to our mind the recollection of the Persian and Urdu proverb: *Muddai sust, gawah chant*, "The claimant is slow in proving the claim, but the witness is so active that he exceeds the limit of the claim."

HENRI M. LÉON, M.A., LL.D., F.S.P.

## AN ANSWER TO LORD HEADLEY

DEAR SIR,

I am the lady to whom Lord Headley referred in his address on Toleration, delivered at the Mosque on February 21st, and parts of whose letter he quoted. At the time of writing to him I had no idea that my letter would ever receive publicity, at the same time I have no objection whatever that it should do so, and Lord Headley quoted my words most fairly and correctly. but as I could see that part of my letter was misunderstood by him I should be glad of the opportunity of explaining myself. I have Lord Headley's assurance that you will be quite willing to insert my letter in the ISLAMIC REVIEW, and I can only thank you most cordially for your open-minded kindness and courtesy in doing so. When I asked Lord Headley not to send me any more copies of the ISLAMIC REVIEW I see he thought, and perhaps naturally, that I was afraid that "too much study of the simple Islamic teachings might possibly weaken my belief in the divinity of Christ." I should like to say most emphatically that that was the last thought that ever entered my head. No! no! a thousand times no! "I know Whom I have believed." The perusal would only, I trust, have increased my faith in the Son of God, "Who loved me and gave Himself for me." My reason for making this request was that an article I read in the magazine seemed so dishonouring to Him Whom my soul loveth, He Who shed His precious blood on Calvary



that I might live, He Who is enthroned at God's right hand and Who is coming soon, may be very soon in power and great glory. In the course of Lord Headley's address I notice he says, referring to some verses I quoted, "This is dogmatic teaching, which always seems to me rather at variance with the recorded utterances of Christ Himself." I gather that Lord Headley infers that the Lord Jesus Christ does not Himself claim to be God, but then why did He say to the Samaritan woman, in answer to her statement "I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ," "I that speak unto thee am He"? What does St. John viii. 58 mean? He used the word "Jehovah" there. He says distinctly "Before Abraham was, I am." The Jews at any rate very well understood it—it was to them arrant blasphemy, and they took up stones to stone Him. It is exactly the same word which Jehovah uses in Exodus iii. 14. See also St. John x. 30 and 36, with chap. ix. 35-37. These passages prove most clearly that He claims for Himself perfect equality with God the Father and actual unity of being with Him. See St. Matt. xxviii. 19, where the Lord says, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." How could we baptize in the name (not names) of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost unless they are all one? The same may be said of innumerable passages. If only people would study the Scriptures with an open mind they would find Christ on every page. He says, "Search the Scriptures; they are they which testify of Me." Why was the Passover instituted? Why was the lamb to be slain and the blood sprinkled on the lintel and on the two side-posts? Why did God say, "When I see the blood I will pass over you" (Exod. xii. 13) if it did not typify the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world? With regard to the young man to whom Jesus said "Why callest thou Me good?" This was a palpable assertion of His deity. The force of our Saviour's remark is very clear: "If I am good I must be God, as there is none good but one, and that is God, and if I am not God I am not good." I cannot now touch on all the points in Lord Headley's address; I fear as it is I have trespassed too greatly on your indulgence. I would only say in conclusion that I cannot see in the Scriptures any way of access to God except by the way of the Cross, except through Jesus Christ, Who says so plainly, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and

the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." It is God Who says it, not the Church. If there could have been any other way of saving a poor, lost world, would not God have taken that way? Did it cost Him nothing to give to an agonizing, cruel death His own well-beloved Son? Did it cost the Son of God nothing to leave His Heaven of Light and Love, to come down those starry steepes of light, to tread the thorny way of self-sacrifice which led at last to the Cross of shame and infamy, where He was made a curse for us, where God's wrath fell on Him instead of on us, and where, thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift, every poor soul, no matter how far he or she may have wandered away, may in looking have everlasting life?

I am, dear sir, yours faithfully,

CONSTANCIA SERJEANT,

Author of "When the Saints are Gone,"

Member of the Society of Authors.

SOUTHCOTT HOUSE, BIDEFORD. *March 24, 1915.*

*Muslim India*:—The letter inserted above shows that the writer believes Jesus to be the Son of God or God Himself, and that all mankind is sinful by nature, and that crucifixion of Jesus Christ is the only means of attaining to salvation. The lady does not enter upon any reasoning on her religious conceptions, but she contents herself with these inferences which she thinks can be drawn from some of the verses of the Bible. It may be left for the Rt. Hon. Lord Headley Saif-ur-Rahman Shaikh Rahmat-Ullah Farooq, to deal with the criticism offered on his address, but we may draw the attention of the lady above mentioned to the following verses of the Bible, if she does not care to travel out of the province of her Scriptures.

*The chila that is father to the man is not sinful by birth and nature*:—

"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

"And Jesus called A LITTLE CHILD unto him, and set him in the midst of them.

"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."—ST. MATT. xviii. 1-3.

## KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.

*The avenue leading to the kingdom of heaven :—*

“And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?

“And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God: *but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.*”—ST. MATT. xix. 16, 17.

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

“For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

“Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be great in the kingdom of heaven.

“For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”—ST. MATT. v. 17-20).

*All righteous people share with the holy prophet Jesus the privilege of being the children of God :—*

“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.”—ST. MATT. v. 44, 45.

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”—ST. MATT. v. 9.

“For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.”—ST. MARK iii. 35.

“And call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your Father, which is in heaven.”—ST. MATT. xxiii. 9.

“He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

“He that receiveth a prophet [i.e. Jesus] in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man [a disciple] in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.”—ST. MATT. x. 40, 41.



## HOW THE BIBLE WAS INVENTED

By M. M. MANGASARIAN

MANY good people believe that the Bible was given by inspiration of God. The wording of my subject suggests that it is the work of men. . . . Am I trying to offend people by intimating that the Bible was *invented*? On the contrary, I am exposing myself to criticism by telling these good people the truth about the Bible, which their own preachers, for some reason or other, have withheld from them.

One of the texts in the Bible, attributed to Jesus, says that, "It were better for a man that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were cast into the sea," rather than that he should offend, that is to say, unsettle the faith of, "one of those little ones that believe in me."<sup>1</sup> According to this saying of Jesus, a man must keep his questionings and his doubts to himself. He shall not talk where he is liable to upset the faith of some believing soul, some aged mother, some Sunday-school lad or lassie. The man who will go about disturbing people's religious peace, deserves to be drowned with a millstone about his neck! What is your opinion of such a suggestion?

If you approve of this sentiment, attributed to the founder of Christianity, then the work which we are doing here, every Sunday is quite wicked; a millstone around our necks is what we deserve, and the bottom of the sea is where we belong.

Psychologists tell us that there is great power in suggestion. With all my love and reverence for whatever is sweet and sane in the Gospels, I must protest against this text, because it is a suggestion to violence and persecution. If Jesus recommends a millstone for the neck of the heretic who upsets people's illusions and makes inquirers out of believers, and intimates further that drowning is too good for them, why not take the hint and act upon it? He expresses a wish, shall we not fulfill it? Alas! we know, too well, that in less enlightened ages the suggestion of Jesus was not only carried out, but vastly improved upon—by the Spanish Inquisition, for instance.

Let us be fair. When a man is accused, it is his privilege to defend himself. If Jesus suggests that the investigator who

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xviii. 6; Mark ix. 42.

unsettles people's beliefs should be drowned, before the suggestion is acted upon, the disturber should be given a chance to be heard. Would that be asking too much? Let us see, then, just what it means to command a man to suppress whatever might disturb his neighbour's faith: It means that if I am announced to speak on the Bible, for instance, I must say nothing to which the weakest or the most credulous among my hearers might object. If I do, I shall deserve to be tied to a millstone and drowned! But let us turn this proposition about to see how it would work: Having discovered a truth, and yearning in my soul to express it, suppose I were to say, that if any man in this audience shall scare me into silence—shall cheat me out of the joy and duty of imparting that truth to the world by threatening to be offended, or to be unsettled by it—he ought to have a millstone tied about his neck and cast into the sea. How would that do?

Again, an illustration, which I have used before, can with great aptness be repeated here: A woman is given a ring with a stone in it. Not being herself a connoisseur of precious stones, she is easily made to believe that her jewel is the most costly in the world. This is repeated to her in order to render her happy, and to make her fancy herself as the possessor of a gem of great value. Observe, now, how much it costs to keep up this deception. All her friends have to agree to say nothing that may unsettle her faith in her *imitation* jewel. Indeed, they must pretend not to know the difference between the genuine and the sham stone. To preserve this woman's illusion, they must prevaricate and even openly lie, if pressed to do so, lest the poor woman's faith in her jewel be lost. Is it fair to demand so great a sacrifice to prolong the fantasy of a foolish woman?

Apply this illustration now to the Bible. A great many people have been told, when they were young, that this book is a personal message to them from God. God has with his own hand inscribed a message to them, and this is it! What joy! What a treasure! Now, these people, not being students themselves, accepted implicitly what they were told by their teachers—just as the woman, not being an expert herself, took her jeweller's word about the value of the stone in her ring. In order not to offend this child-like faith in the Bible, word is sent out to everybody to hush. "Hush! not a word! not a whisper!

—Hush! hush!” is the cry of all. To uphold this conspiracy of silence, arrangements are made to dictate what may and what may not be said in public. A preacher in praying or preaching might give away the secret—he might inadvertently say something which might prick this pretty bubble of illusion. Hence, in the Catholic and Episcopal Churches, all the prayers are printed, and the preachers pray according to the book. Do you think the Church will let a man close his eyes and open his mouth and say whatever comes into his head? Indeed, not! He must pray by the book. In the Protestant denominations there is the creed, to which you swear your allegiance before you open your mouth in one of their churches, and the moment you are caught talking beyond what the creed allows, your ordination is taken from you and your mouth is shut. Dear me! all this regime is for the purpose of encouraging the conceit that man has been favoured with a hand-written, personal message from the Creator of the Universe.

If this were all, we ourselves would not take notice of it. But we, too, are compelled to join in this conspiracy of silence and suppression, and to lie in the interests of the delicate believers whose faith cannot stand the least strain. Darwin must beware how he writes about the origin of species, or the descent of man. Some believer, hugging ecstatically his Bible to his bosom, might read Darwin's books and lose his blissful conceit. Do not think, do not invent, do not announce your truth, ye philosophers, scientists, and reformers, without first consulting the prejudices of the “little ones” in the faith; for if you unsettle the faith of a single believer, it were better that you were weighted down into the sea by a millstone hanging about your necks! And you, whose love and genius give us our daily victory over error and disease—whose thought is our daily bread and beauty—you, too, must hush; you must become sterile, or be content to speak by rote, lest you should disturb the repose of the believer who has laid himself down to sleep. The theological babe must not be awakened. It will bawl and cry if aroused, and better than cause one of those babes to cry, let there be no intellectual life in the world! And what is your opinion of that?

But in the next place the suggestion that people who rob their weaker fellows of their illusions should be drowned, even when it does not lead to persecution, is an encouragement



to *hypocrisy* and *imposture*, as the story of the composition of the Bible, which will now be told, so plainly shows.

*The Bible is an Oriental book.* When, in reading the Bible, I find in it exaggeration, invention, and even unscrupulous misrepresentation, I am not astonished, because I know that it is an *Oriental* book. But the orthodox believer, in order to excuse or explain away, for instance, these violations of the law of veracity, resorts frequently to sophistry, subterfuge, and even alas! to lies more unscrupulous than any found in the Bible. This is as sad as it is true. But to defend one lie, or to make it look like the truth, more lying becomes necessary.

There are numerous instances of the Oriental practice of lying in the Bible. Abraham suppressed the truth about his wife, and declared she was his sister. Jacob deceived his father, Isaac, and made him believe he was Esau, and stole his blessing. The same patriarch deceived his father-in-law, and stole his gods. God himself instructs Samuel to tell a falsehood to Saul, to whom he is sent on a mission. "I will send them a lying spirit," threatens Jehovah, when he is out of temper. And, in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul is Oriental enough to resort to "craft and guile," and to be "all things to all men," and even to lie for the glory of God. Aside from this being his own policy, he imagined that it was also the policy of God. "And for this cause," he says, in his Epistle to the Thessalonians, "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe in a lie." Reflect upon that! To send a delusion to people means to trip or trap them—to catch them in a snare. People tell lies, either to protect themselves, or to hurt others. God needed not to resort to this means to protect *himself*. Paul tells us he does this to hurt others. "God shall send them strong delusion, that they might believe in a lie that *they all might be damned*." Paul was an Asiatic, and the Asiatic conscience for veracity has never enjoyed a very high reputation. The Apostle Paul even boasts that, "being crafty, I caught you with guile." In his "Principles of Ethics" (sec. 158, vol. i. p. 402) Herbert Spencer writes:—

*"We have proof in the Bible that, apart from the lying which constituted false witness and was to the injury of a*

*neighbour, there was among the Hebrews but little reprobation of lying. Indeed, it would be remarkable were it otherwise, considering that Jahveh set the example; as when, to ruin Ahab, he commissioned 'a lying spirit' (1 Kings xxii. 22) to deceive his prophets; or as when, according to Ezekiel xiv. 9, he threatened to use deception as a means of vengeance. 'If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.' Evidently from a race-character, which evolved such a conception of a deity's principles, there naturally came no great regard for veracity."*

A very curious controversy took place some years ago between Herbert Spencer and a religious weekly. Quoting the words of Paul to the Romans, where he says, "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my *lie* unto his glory, etc.," Spencer condemned Paul for this; the religious weekly objected that Paul was only speaking ironically. And Mr. Spencer generously admitted that such a supposition was quite possible. We are ourselves willing to give Paul every opportunity to exonerate himself, and will not press the charge too vigorously against him. But whatever Paul may have meant in his argument with the Romans, what shall we say about his defence of "guile and craft" in his Epistle to the Thessalonians? And what about his general policy, to be all things to all men—that is to say, to trim and compromise?

Moreover, the practice of the Church during the early centuries confirms the criticism of such representative writers as Mosheim, Ellicott, Warburton, Lecky, Gibbon, Jortin, Gieseler, of the pernicious maxim of the early Church, "that those who make it their business to deceive with a view of promoting the cause of religion, were deserving rather of commendation than of censure."

"History forces upon us," writes Bishop Ellicott, "the recognition of pious fraud as a principle which was by no means inoperative in the earliest ages of Christianity." It reflects credit upon this bishop—this European—to admit that the early Christians cultivated the Oriental practice of "lying for the glory of God." Eusebius, the saint who invented Constantine's vision of the cross, boasted that "*he had written what*

*redounded to the glory and suppressed whatever tended to the disgrace of religion."* What an admission!

My object in speaking of this is to show that even as our Oriental-born religion brought over into Europe the germ of monasticism, religious intolerance, the practice of burning men and women alive—not one of which institutions previously existed in Europe; it also brought over the Oriental practice of pious lying, and gave it a vogue which it had never before enjoyed in Europe.

It is universally admitted that besides the four Gospels which the Churches believe to be genuine, there were, in the early centuries, hundreds of Gospels which have been rejected as spurious. Pause for a moment, and think of what that means. Why were there so many lying Gospels? The very fact that our four Gospels were chosen from a pile of manuscripts, every one of which claimed to be genuine, is a sad commentary upon the morality of the early churchmen. I trust you duly appreciate the significance of this. What was it that gave an impetus to the industry of imposture? How explain the vogue which lying for religion enjoyed after the conversion of the Roman Empire? Was it so profitable to manufacture Gospels that everybody tried his hand at it? I cannot get away from the tremendous fact, that by the admission of the Churches themselves, there were a great number of apocryphal Gospels thrown upon the religious market as soon as Christianity became well established in Europe. What made lying so popular and profitable all at once? I want an answer. If it is true, and it is, that our four Gospels had to be voted upon from among a heap of other Gospels, each claiming to be the only true Gospel, then, speaking as a student of history, whether it unsettles you or not, I am constrained to say that this Oriental religion, as soon as it set foot in Europe, lifted lying to the dignity of a vocation.

#### VARIANTS.

But when we come to the four Gospels themselves, pronounced to be canonical, do you know, my readers, that there are upwards of 150,000 different readings of these same Gospels? That is to say, the same passages read one way in one manuscript, and another way in another, while they may be absent altogether from third, etc. In view of all these facts, reflect upon the intelligence of the man who, Sunday after



Sunday, calls these the infallible word of God. He does so because he is speaking by the creed, to which he has sworn allegiance for the rest of his life. One hundred and fifty thousand various readings of the New Testament! And think of the centuries of bloodshed and controversy over these contradictory texts!

Open, if you please, your New Testament and read the seventh verse of the fifth chapter of the First Epistle of John, then look for the same verse in the Revised Version, and you will not be able to find it there. After being accepted as the word of God for two thousand years, it has been finally expurgated. To-day, according to one Bible (the King James Version), this passage is inspired; according to another Bible (the Revised Version), it is an imposture. Let me quote the text:—

*"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."*

What better proof of the Trinity do we need? On black and white, in the Bible, John, the Apostle, declares by the power of the Holy Ghost, that there are three in heaven—gives their names, and adds that these three are one.

Some lying scribe, some crabbed sectarian, some conscienceless copyist, bribed by his party, must have invented this text, which for twenty centuries has been worshipped as the word of God! "Wicked" sceptics, two thousand years ago, denounced the clumsy imposture, but they were silenced by the halter and the sword. It has taken the Christian Church nearly two thousand years to discover that the sceptics were right. It has taken the Church two thousand years of evolution in honesty and intelligence to throw out this spurious text. It has taken the Church, claiming to be under the guidance of the Spirit of God, twenty hundred years in which to acquire the courage and love of truth of the "wicked" sceptics who first called attention to this lie hiding behind an apostle's name. Reflect upon this! After using every means, even the most cruel, to force this Trinitarian text upon the world, the Revised Version *vomits* the imposture, unable to retain it any longer!

It would be unnecessary to multiply illustrations, but let my readers also consult the words in the margin of the last chapter

of the Gospel of Mark, in the Revised Bible. Eleven entire verses of this chapter, after having been "sworn in" for two thousand years as the word of God; after having been repeatedly quoted as representing God's mind on matters of faith; after causing untold misery, cruel wars, persecutions, diabolical tortures, and more than all these, such mental anguish in millions of sensitive minds as no repentance can atone for—these verses, among which is the following: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation. . . . He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, *but he that believeth not shall be damned*"—have been placed under an interrogation mark! Ah, for how much misery is the above damnatory clause responsible! How many lives this leprous falsehood has blasted. This cruel imposture, like a malignant growth, kept eating into the sound parts in human nature for twenty long centuries!

Among these eleven verses are also Jesus' promise of miraculous power to his disciples, such as casting out devils, juggling with live serpents, drinking deadly poisons, laying hands on the sick—which has filled our world with charlatans without number. But now comes the Revised Version, and quietly dismisses from the Word of God these eleven verses, with these words in the margin: "The two oldest Greek manuscripts, and some other authorities, omit from verse 9 to the end (verse 20). Some other authorities have a different ending to the Gospel." Read the above carefully and reflect. The old translators suppressed all this information, and gave us to believe that we were not only reading the Word of God, but the only Word of God in existence. The revisers say, "Some other authorities have a *different* ending to the Gospel." Is not that edifying? How did they decide which "ending of the Gospel" to print as the Word of God? And why did the translators of the Bible wait two thousand years before they gave out this information? Is it to their increasing honesty that we owe this admission, or is it to the increasing power of the non-church-going world which has compelled this admission from their lips? Yes, yes; pause and think of how an organization must have become gangrened with imposture, to have resisted successfully every claim of truth and honour for two thousand years! Time forbids me to give other illustrations of the—I regret to say it—manipulations of the Word of God by

its custodians. We can hardly suppress our indignation at the effrontery of the pious crew, who, to advance their "ism" or to make converts, did not hesitate to *pervert* history!

But aside from *doctoring* their own Gospels, the early Christians did not hesitate to submit the writings of the great pagans—Seneca, Pliny, Tacitus, Suetonius, Marcus Aurelius, and the Jewish historian Josephus—to the same indignity, by slipping passages into their works favourable to the Christian religion. Perhaps I am to be blamed for taking this matter so seriously, but how can I help it? I feel the wrong, the shame, and the crime of it, deep in my heart—when I picture to myself an Asiatic scribbler—a sectarian, a clown, a rogue, a cheat—tampering with the works of a dead master—pushing and squeezing his imposture into the mouth of the mighty dead—defiling the thought of the philosopher with the foulness of his superstition! It makes my heart rise and knock with vehemence against my ribs until I feel as if they would break. Not only were individual passages invented and slipped into the pagan writings, but a number of books were written and attributed to the greatest shining lights of the old Roman world. Dr. Gieseler, a prominent Christian historian of modern Germany, who has made, as most German students do, a painstaking study of the early centuries, says that, when the Christians were accused of inventing manuscripts, they "quieted their consciences respecting the forgery with the idea of their good intentions." "It was an age of literary fraud," declares Bishop Ellicott.

There is shown at the library in Jena a letter purported to have been written by Publius Lentulus, the supposed predecessor of Pontius Pilate. The impostor who concocted this epistle and affixed the signature of a Roman governor to it makes him tell the Roman Senate "that there had appeared (in Judea) a man endowed with great powers, whose name is Jesus Christ." The earmarks of fraud are so plain that even the orthodox are ashamed of this clumsy manufacture. Another Gospel is attributed to Pontius Pilate. Nicodemus is made the author of still another. The Emperor Aurelius is made to recommend the Christians to the Senate for their valour; Tiberius even gives his testimony in their favour; Jesus himself is made the author of a treatise in his own behalf; the Virgin



Mary writes the story of her wonderful child ; Adam, even testifies to the truth of the Christian religion, though he is suppose to have lived nearly four thousand years before Jesus. *There is no end to the list of inventions.*

But one of the most daring forgeries is the following passage in Josephus :—

*“ About this time appeared Jesus, a wise man, if indeed it be right to speak of him as a man, for he was a performer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew after him many of the Jews as well as the Gentiles. THIS SAME WAS THE CHRIST. And though Pilate, by the judgment of the chief rulers among us, delivered him up to be crucified . . . he showed himself alive on the third day. . . . ”*

That this famous passage in Josephus is an invention, is now generally admitted. Stopping suddenly in the midst of a paragraph, the Jewish historian is made to announce that Jesus was the Christ, and that he rose from the dead, etc. *This, if true, would make Josephus a Christian, which he was not.* In one of his essays, De Quincy says that only lunatics now believe in the genuineness of the Josephus passage, while a bishop of the Anglican Church—Warburton—calls it “a stupid forgery.”

But the early Christians made even the pagan gods testify for Jesus. They composed verses in praise of the Christian religion and attributed them to the pagan Sibyls. The oracles of Rome were made to prophesy the coming of Christ.

The pious ecclesiastics, in their zeal for their “ism,” invented also an *Apostles Creed*, and an *Apostolic Constitution*, containing directions how a Christian Church or State should be governed which the apostles never saw.

Yet we must not forget that, hand in hand with this dishonest work of invention, went the shameful destruction of whatever was deemed unfavourable to the new religion. Many of the master-pieces of pagan literature were destroyed when they could not be tampered with. The rare volumes of history, philosophy, and poetry were reduced to ashes, and they might not live to bear witness to the greatness of the pre-Christian world. Even as they destroyed the monuments and temples of Athens and

Rome, they destroyed also the precious manuscripts of Greek and Roman authors. From the following confession of St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, we may gauge the temper of the early Christian Church: "I myself would willingly assume the guilt (of destroying pagan buildings) and say that 'I have set them in flames that there may be not a place left in which Christ is denied.'"

In conclusion: The authenticity of the Bible is not a question of belief, it is a question of evidence. The evidence which I have offered proves that the Bible was invented. And I promise to retract and apologize for the position I have maintained in this lecture, if the theologians, who are at home on this subject, will prove that there were no spurious gospels, no impostures, no lying manuscripts thrown upon the religious market as soon as the pagan state embraced Christianity. I will also listen to any arguments which may be produced to show that the *Apostles' Creed* was written by the Apostles; that Constantine abdicated in favour of the pope; that the pagan Sibyls prophesied of Christ, and that Josphus acknowledged Jesus to have been the Messiah.

The Bible has for centuries blocked the way of progress. As an infallible book it has enslaved conscience and encouraged intolerance. To defend its many puerilities, and even immoral tales, men have resorted to casuistry and dissimulation. To save the Bible a sea of blood has been shed. Why? What other book has ever needed the sword to protect it against criticism? I believe that men will be more honest, more tolerant, more progressive, more independent, and more unafraid, if they could be delivered from the bondage of the Bible. To overthrow its tyranny, to prove that a Book can not be the Master of living and growing men, to raise man from his knees, to bring back the colour to his cheeks and the blood to his pinched brain—in short, to free him from the paralysing "thus saith the Lord" of king and priest!—was the motive which compelled me to write "How the Bible was Invented."—*The Rationalist*.

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He who knows Allah loves Him;  
and he who knows the world hates it.

HASAN BASRI.

6

وكان جزاء سَلِّ السيف سَيْفًا : فذا قوما اذا قوا كالجبانِ  
 اذا اذارت رُحَى البلوى عليهم : فكانوا لهُوةً قوق الدَّهانِ  
 فطفقوا يهربون كمثل جُبِي : فاخذوا ثم قُتِلوا مثل ضانِ  
 اذا ما شَاهدوا قتلى كُفِّي : فرفعوا طاعة عَلمِ الدمانِ  
 سُراةً الحَيِّ جاءوا نادمينَا : فرحم المصطفى نحر الحنانِ  
 واما الجاهلون فما اطاعوا : فاعد لهم فؤوس الاحتقانِ  
 سَقُوا كاسِ المنايا ثم سيقوا : الى نارٍ تُلَوِّح وجهه جاني  
 فهذا اجر جهل الجاهلينَا : من الرحمن عند الاستئنانِ  
 وما كان الرحيم مذل قوم : ولكن بعد ظلم وافتنانِ  
 وكل التورفى القرآن لى : يميل الها لكون الى الدخانِ  
 { وقال ايضا على الله مقامه }

لِتابُ كَرِيمٍ حاز كل فضيلة : وفيه وجدنا ما يقى ويبقى  
 كعينٍ كحيلٍ زينت صفحاته : بنظرةٍ من عينٍ خلدٍ ينظرُ  
 طرئً طلاوته ولم تعف نقطة : لما صانه الله القدير الموقرُ  
 فيا عجبًا من حسنه وجماله : ارى الله درُّ ومسكٍ وعنبرُ  
 وان سرورى فى ادارة كاسه : فهل فى التداعى حاضر من يكرُرُ  
 ورياء قد فاق الحدائق كلها : نسيم الصبَا من شانه تحيّرُ  
 اذا ما تلا من آية طالب الهدى : يرى نوره تجرى كعينٍ ويطرُ  
 وفيه من الله اللطيف عجائب : اشاهد هانى كل وقتٍ وانظرُ  
 كتابك جليلٌ قد تقاى شأنه : يدُ افى رؤس المنكرين ويكسرُ  
 (محمد عبد المحسن الحوينى)  
 (مولوى قاضى)



وَمَا الْقُرْآنُ إِلَّا مَثَلٌ دُرٌّ ۖ قَرَأَيْدُ زَانِهَا حَسَنُ الْبَيَانِ  
وَمَا مَسَّتْ أَلْفُ الْكَاشِحِينَ ۖ مَارْفَهُ التَّقَى مَثَلُ الْحَصَانِ  
بِهِ مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ وَعَقْلٍ ۖ وَاسْرَارٍ وَابْكَارٍ الْمَعَانِي  
يُسَكَّتُ كَلَمَنِي يَعْدُو بَضْفِي ۖ يَكْتُتُ كُلَّ كَذَابٍ وَجَانِي  
رَأْسَادُ رَمَزِنْتَهُ كَثِيرًا ۖ فَدِينَا رَبَّنَا ذَا الِامْتِنَانِ  
وَمَا ادْرَاكَ مَا الْقُرْآنُ نَيْضًا ۖ خَفِيرٌ جَالِبُ نَحْوِ الْجَنَانِ  
لَهُ نُورَانٌ نُورٌ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ ۖ وَنُورٌ مِنْ بَيَانِ كَالْجُمَانِ  
كَلَامٌ فَائِقٌ مَارَاقٍ طَرْفِي ۖ جَمَالٌ بَعْدَهُ وَالنَّيْرَانِ  
آيَةُ الشَّمْسِ عِنْدَ سَنَاهِ دُخَانِي ۖ وَمَا لِلْعَلِّ وَالتَّسْبِيتِ الْيَمَانِي  
وَإِنِّي يَكُونُ لِلْقُرْآنِ مَثَلٌ ۖ وَلَيْسَ لَهُ بِهَذَا الْفَضْلُ ثَانِي  
وَرَثْنَا الصَّخْفَ فَاقْتُلْ كَلْبِي ۖ وَسَبَقَتْ كُلُّ اسْفَارٍ بِشَانِ  
وَجَاءَتْ بَعْدَ مَا خَرَّتْ خِيَامٌ ۖ وَخُرَّتِ الْبُيُوتُ مَعَ الْمَبَانِ  
مَحَتْ كُلَّ الطَّرَائِقِ غَيْرَ بَرٍّ ۖ وَجَذَّتْ رَأْسَ بَدْعَاتِ الزَّمَانِ  
كَانَ سَيُوفُهَا كَانَتْ كُنَارٍ ۖ بِهَا خُرِقَتْ مَخَارِيقُ الْإِدَانِ  
إِذَا اسْتَدْعَى كِتَابُ اللَّهِ شَلَا ۖ فَعَيَّ الْقَوْمَ وَاسْتَتَرُوا كِفَانِي  
وَسُلِّيتْ جُرَّةَ الْأَسْنَانِ مِنْهُمْ ۖ مِنَ الْهَوْلِ الَّذِي حَلَّ الْجَنَانِ  
فَمَنْ عَجِبَ الْكِبَا مَثَلِ مَيِّتٍ ۖ وَقَدْ مَرَّ نَوَاعِي لُطْفِ الْبَيَانِ  
وَانْزَلَهُ مَهْمِنًا حُدُيًّا ۖ فَفَرَّوْا كَالْهَمِّ كَالْمُسْتَهَانِ  
وَصَارَتْ عَصَبُهُمْ نَفْقًا ثَيْنًا ۖ فَنَهَمُ مِنْ أَتَى بَعْدَ الْحَرَانِ  
وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ تَلَبَّتْ مُسْتَشِيطًا ۖ لِحَرْبِ الصَّادِقِينَ وَاللَّطَّانِ  
فَاتَمَّ قَدْ سَمِعْتُمْ مَا أَصْبَحُوا ۖ بِضَعُفَةِ السُّيُوفِ مِنَ الْهَوَانِ

4

أَوْ بَنَى - عَيْنُ الْمَعَارِفِ كُلِّهَا : آتَاهُ حَبْثٌ يَبْتَغَى - لَا يُنْبِتُ بِحَبْرِهِ :  
 الزَّخَارِ كُلُّهُ مَوْلَعًا - أَقْبَلُ عَيْنُونَ عِلْمِهِ : أَوْ اعْرِضَنِي مُسْتَوَلِفًا - وَاشْفِ  
 هَذَاهُ أَوْ : أَعْصِيهِ إِنَّكَ تَمْلِكُ مَلَفًا مَسْفًا - مَا عَادَ الْقُرْآنُ فِي : الْمِيدَانِ  
 شَابَابًا بَزْرَعًا - قَتَلَ الْوَدَّارُ عَمَّا : وَإِنْ بَارَ الدَّوْمُسْبَغًا - قَدْ انْكَرُوا  
 جَهْلًا وَمَا : بَلَّغُوهُ عِلْمًا مَبْلَغًا : حَتَّى انْشَرَا كَالْحَائِيَيْنِ : وَاضْرُوا  
 نَارَ الْوَعَا - نَزَّرَ عَلَى نُورٍ هُدًى : يَوْمًا فَيَوْمًا فِي الشَّوَا - مَنْ كَانَ مُنْكَرَ  
 نُورِهِ : قَدْ جُسَّه مُتَفَرِّعًا - فِيهَا الْعِلْمُ جَمِيعُهَا : وَحَلِيبُهَا  
 يَمْنِي أَرْتَعًا - فِيهَا الْمَعَارِفُ كُلُّهَا : وَقَلِيبُهَا بَلَّ بَلْفًا - أَعْطَى الْوَرَى  
 بِيَدِ لَدَيْهِ : مَاءٌ أَمِينًا سَيِّعًا - أَرَوَى الْخَلْدَ يُقْ كُلُّهُمْ : إِلَّا لَيْمًا  
 أَبْدَعًا - مَنْ جَاءَهُ مُتَبَخَّرًا : وَارَى مَدَى أَوْ مَبْرَعًا - فَتَرَاهُ  
 مَقْلُوبًا عَلَى : تَرْبِ الْهَوَانِ مُرَّعًا - سَيْفٌ يُكْسِرُ ضِرْسِي مَنْ :  
 بَارَأَوْ جَاءَ مُثْقِفًا - أَسَدٌ مُزَوَّقٌ صَوْلُهُ إِنْ : رَاغَ جَهْلُ أَوْ رَعَا -  
 وَيُلْ لِكِفَّارٍ لَدَيْهِ : لَا يَفَارِقُ مَلْدَعًا - وَيُلْ يَمْنِي بَزَغَتْ لَهُ : شَمْسِي  
 فَعَادَ امْبَرَعًا - مَنْ فَرَّ يَمْنِي فَيَضَانِهِ : أَلَا عَدَا وَمِمَّا افْرَعًا - مَا كَانَ  
 قَلْبًا تَائِبًا : بَلْ كَانَ لَحْمًا أَسْلَفًا - وَقَالَ أَيْضًا أَعْلَى اللَّهُ مَقَامَهُ  
 أَلَا يَا أَيُّهَا الْحَزَنُ الشَّحِيحُ : هَوَيْتَ لَذَى اللَّبَانَةِ الْهَوَانِ  
 وَمَا تَدْرِي الْهُدَى وَحَمَلَتْ جَهْلًا : أَنَا جِيلُ النَّصَارَى كَالْأَتَانِ  
 تَنْضَضِي مَثَلُ نَضَضَةِ الْإِنْفَاعِ : وَتَهْدِي مَثَلُ عَادَاتِ الْإِدَانِ  
 حَلَمٌ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ صَدَقًا : وَإِيمَانًا بِتَصْدِيقِ الْجَنَانِ  
 شَفَقْتُمْ أَيُّهَا النَّوْكِ بِشَوْكٍ : وَاعْرِضْتُمْ عَنِ الزَّهْرِ الْحَسَنِ  
 وَآثَرْتُمْ أَمَا عَزْدَاتٍ صَخِيرٍ : عَلَى مَخْضَرَةٍ قَاعِ حِجَانِ

والكلام الرقيق البارد وما جئَتْ با طيب واحلى وفيه الفاظ  
لذنا وكذا وانك اسقطت في كلامك وباعدت عن هرامك  
ولست من المجيدين - فلا حاجة الى ان ناتي بمثله من الاقوال  
او نتوازن في المقال ونتحاذي حذو النعال فاليك عناوتجانف  
واترك الاوصاف فان كلامك سقط عند الدواب المشهورين  
والفصحاء الماهرين - ولكنهم ما سروا ذلك المسرى وما  
قد حوا في هذه الدعوى بل قبلوا العلى مراتب بلا غتة وعجوا  
لعلو شأن فصاحتهم وقالوا ان هذا الا سحر شيبين  
والكثير منهم امنوا باعجازه واقروا بتناوش بازه وعجزوا عن  
درك هندازه وقالوا كلام فاق الكلام فاق كلام البشر وكله  
لبس مع شيء من القشر وعليه طلاوة وفيه حلوة - وهو  
غدق لا ينفذ من شرب الشاربين - وما نبسوا بينة حكمة  
في قدح شأنه وما فاحوا بكلام في جرح بيانه بل انهم نسوا  
جمال الفكر في ميدانه ثم رجعوا مرعوبين نادمين - واذا نلت  
عليهم بعض آياته خسروا ساجدين وباكين - والله درسي  
ومرشدي ثم حيث قال هذه القصيدة في فضائل القرآن  
وشان كتاب الله الرحمن - فقال اعلى الله مقامه ورفي الدارين  
اعلامه - لما ارى الفرقان ميسره تروى من طننى - من كان  
نابغ وقته : جاء المواقين الشفا - واذا ارى وجهها : بانار الجمال  
مصبفا - قد رى المعارض انه : الفا الفصاحة اولفا - من كان ذا  
عين النهى : فالى محاسنه صفى - الا الذي من جهله : ابني الضلالة



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لا ياتون بمثله ولو كان بعضهم لبعض ظهيراً ولقد صرفنا القرآن  
 في هذا القرآن من كل مثل فإني أكثر الناس آل كفوراً { وقال تعالى  
 { وما كان هذا القرآن أن يفترى من دون الله ولكن تصديق  
 الذي بين يديه وتفصيل الكتاب لا ريب فيه من رب العالمين  
 أم يقولون افتراه قل فاتوا بسورة مثله وادعوا مني استطعتم  
 من دون الله إن كنتم صادقين { وقال تعالى { أم يقولون افتراه  
 قل فاتوا بشيء من مثله مفتريات وادعوا من استطعتم من دون  
 الله إن كنتم صادقين فان لم يستجيبوا لكم فاعلموا أنما أنزل بعلم الله  
 وإن لا إله إلا هو فهل أنتم مسلمون { فحجزوا الحكم عن المقابلة  
 في البيان ومالوا إلى السيف والسنان ومنهم من أسلم وانحوى  
 لا عجز القرآن مثلاً كلبيد بن ربيعة العامري صاحب المعلقة  
 الاربعة فاته ادرك الاسلام وتشرف به وارى الاخلاص  
 التام ومات سنة احدى واربعين وكذا كثير منهم اقرؤا  
 بان القرآن الكريم مملوء من العبارات المهدبة والاستعارات  
 المستغذبة والافانين المستمحة والمضامين الحكيمية  
 المشحة بل من معنى النظر منهم فسعى الى الاسلام وحضر  
 ودخل في المؤمنين فلو كان القرآن الكريم مستزاد من اعلى  
 مدارج الكمال في فصاحة المقال وبلغة الاقوال كان  
 الامراب سهل على المخالفين ولقالوا ايها الرجل ان الكلام الذي  
 عرضت علينا والحديث الذي آتته لدينا ليس بفصيح  
 بل ليس بصحيح ولا نجد فيه غير المعاني المطروقة المرددة

{بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ - نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ {

## {إِعْجَازُ الْقُرْآنِ {

فيا عجبا لمن يصول على الذي انعم الكابر بلفاء الزمان واتم  
الحجة على فصحاء اهل اللسان وخضعت له اعناق  
الادباء وامن به نوابغ الشعراء وجاءوا خاضعين  
مقرين ولوانهم كانوا اهل اللسان وقد غدوا بلبان البيان  
وكانوا يصبون القلوب باقانيں العبارات وملح الادب  
ونوادى اشارات وكانوا في هذه السلك وعلم  
محاسنها من الماهرين فالقرآن الكريم ما دعى اعجاز  
البلاغة الا في الرياغة لان العرب في زمانه كانوا هم لا  
غيرهم فصحاء العصر ولفاء الدهر وهم العالمون  
اساليب الفصاحة في النظم والنثر وكان مدار تفاخرهم  
على غرر البيان ودرر رده وثمار الكلام وزهره وكانوا  
يناضلون بالقصائد المبكرة والخطب المحبزة وهم  
في ذلك سوابق الميادين فحاط بهم الله تعالى شأنه في  
كتابه الحميد وفرقانه الحميد {ان كنتم في ريب مما نزلنا  
على عبدنا فاتوا بسورة من مثله وادعوا شهداءكم من دون الله ان  
كنتم صادقين فان لم تفعلوا ولنى تفعلوا فاتقوا النار التي اعدت  
للكافرين { وقال تعالى {ولا يتدبرون القرآن ولو كان من عند  
غير الله لوجدوا فيه اختلافا كثيرا { وقال تعالى {قل لئن  
اجتمعت الناس والنس والجن على ان ياتوا بمثل هذا القرآن